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OPINION METER

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INSIDE



Hello Dolly!

Hurricane Dolly barrels into South Texas, lashing the coast with winds up to 100 mph.

NATION...Page 24



Afghan-Bound

Al-Qaida's foreign fighters who have for years bedeviled Iraq are increasingly going to Afghanistan.

WORLD...Page 27



Hellboy

When the camera focuses on Ron Perlman, it captures the sum of his distinguished parts.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 32

NMI gets \$333K grant for labor enforcement. **PAGE 2**
Torres scores Fitial nominees to CPA board. **PAGE 3**

Tax refunds mailed out today



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

GROTTO

A diver makes his way through the waters of the internationally renowned Grotto dive site in Marpi. The Grotto is a unique limestone cavern that is located in the northeast side of Saipan.

The Department of Finance will release tax refunds for 2007 beginning today.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. announced yesterday that the Finance Department is ready to mail out local tax refund checks totaling \$3 million. Eli-

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Onwel, UIC garment firms to shut down

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

Two major garment factories, the United International Corp. and Onwel Garment Manufacturers, will close within the coming months,

See **ONWEL** on Page 4

IN BRIEF

- Onwel will close Aug. 21
- UIC will close Sept. 21

Air Force says no survivors in B-52 crash



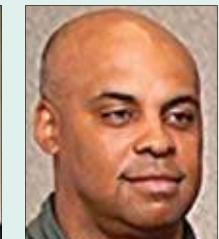
Cooper



Dodson



Gerren



Martin



Shepherd



Williams

HONOLULU (AP)—All six crew

members aboard a B-52 bomber that crashed off Guam were killed, the Air Force said Wednesday as the search effort shifted focus from rescue to recovery of the crew and

pieces of the wreckage. Two bodies have been found; the Air Force, without elaborating, said in a news release that forensic specialists were trying to identify additional remains recovered.

"Losing this bomber crew has been a tragedy felt by everyone here and across the Air Force," said Brig. Gen. Doug Owens, commander of the 36th Wing.

The six crew members were identi-

See **AIR FORCE** on Page 4

Gas prices at Mobil stations on Saipan dropped slightly Wednesday night after a decline in the global price of oil.

Mobil stations are now advertising regular gas for \$4.97 per gallon for self-service and

See **MOBIL** on Page 4

MOBIL PRICES

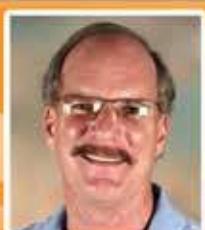
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Local

NMI gets \$333K grant for labor enforcement

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The U.S. Department of the Interior has granted the Commonwealth \$333,000 to enforce

labor and immigration laws.

The Fitial administration announced yesterday that the CNMI government and the U.S. Department of the Interior had reached an agreement on the

terms of the grant from the Initiative on Labor, Immigration, and Law Enforcement.

Under the terms of the grant, the local government will use the money to support the law enforcement

efforts of the CNMI Department of Labor and the Office of the Attorney General. Specifically, the funds will be used to hire five key staff members to assist in the enforcement of labor and immigration laws.

The five positions to be funded through the initiative grant are: labor policy counsel, \$88,319; counsel for civil enforcement, \$74,074; counsel for

immigration policy, \$50,258; Division of Immigration paralegal, \$50,570, and criminal prosecutor/refugee judge, 69,800.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial welcomed the release of the grant, saying the funds will "only further the progress of the Office of the Attorney General and Labor Department."

"I thank [U.S. Office of Insular Affairs] Director Nik Pula

for supporting the CNMI's strong law enforcement efforts by awarding us with these needed grants," said Fitial.

The grant award is valid until Jan. 1, 2010.

The terms of the federal grant also require the CNMI government to consult with

See **NMI GETS** on Page 4

PSS Finance is without air conditioning

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Some Public School System employees are feeling the heat.

Since July 17, the eight staff members and three students in the PSS Finance Department have been working without an air conditioner, acting PSS Commissioner Craig Garrison said.

"It looked like it was old Savannah," he said.

As of Thursday afternoon, the temperature in the room was 83 degrees. On July 17, the temperature reached a high of 94 degrees, Garrison said.

The staff has been using fans and opening windows to keep cool, he said.

"But there's not enough windows in the building to make that happen," he added.

Garrison said a Retirement Building employee first called JWS Air Conditioning on July 17 once they realized there was a problem.

When there was still no let up in the heat, Garrison called the company himself, he said.

"They showed up [Wednesday], put in a part and realized they needed another part," he said.

When the temperature reached 92 degrees on Wednesday, the Assistant Finance Director asked to release the staff for the day, which Garrison did.

Garrison said he told the employees they can work in the commissioner's office if they want.

"They'll keep working," he said. "It's not as hot today, but it's still probably 80 degrees."

A JWS employee who answered the phone Thursday afternoon said the technician was currently at the building, and the system should be fixed by the end of the day.

Garrison said he thinks all of the air conditioning repair companies are probably busy with the rolling blackouts taking place.

"It's good business for air con employees [but] it's bad because they don't have enough manpower," he added.

Garrison said he hopes the company is only prioritizing and is helping buildings that house the elderly or children.

"So we can suffer a little better," he said.

Finance employees referred all questions to the Commissioner.

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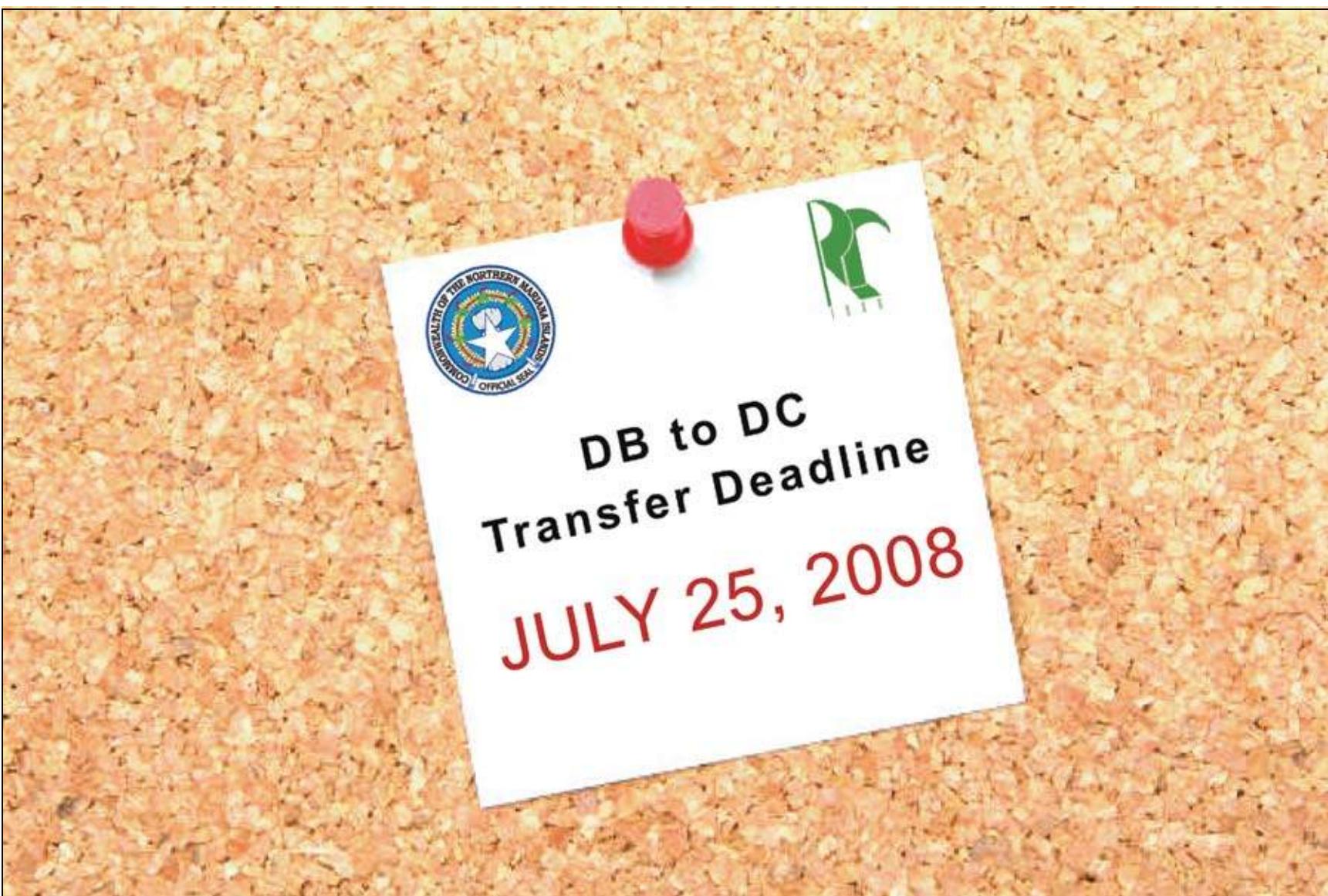
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Torres scores Fitial nominees to CPA board

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

Rep. Stanley Torres (R-Saipan) dropped a Chamorro version of the F-bomb on Gov. Benigno Fitial Thursday in a letter urging the governor to reconsider two of his recent nominees to the board of the Commonwealth Ports Authority, citing potential conflicts of interest.

At issue in the letter are two employees of Tan Holdings subsidiaries nominated along with several other candidates to replace the recently dissolved CPA board: former congressman Absalon Waki Jr., now the advertising sales manager at the *Saipan Tribune*, and Frank B.

Camacho, manager of Pacific Orient Inc., a company with contracts to provide technical services at the local airport.

"They are both employed by subsidiary companies of Tan Holdings, a major tenant of the Francisco C. Ada, Saipan International Airport and contractor for handling aircraft maintenance and ramp services for most of the major airlines, specifically, POI," Torres said in the letter. "These nominees are clearly in conflict."

Torres wrote the remainder of the letter in Chamorro, saying the governor should appoint a CPA board without any vested interests in the Commonwealth's ports, according to sev-

eral translators. The letter concludes, "[Chamorro expletive], *esta do-dos un-nae, basta adai, nae ya siha lamon todū.*"

The expletive Torres employed is a discourteous choice of words for someone speaking to the governor, the translators noted. Although it lacks a direct correlation in English, they said, it is somewhat akin to the "F-bomb."

"Everyone has a right to speak their minds," Waki said in an interview after declining to "dignify" Torres' letter with a response.

Camacho, however, answered the letter by saying his experience with POI will prove a major asset to the board rather than a conflict of interest, adding that he would

Bill requiring DPL to consult mayors vetoed

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has vetoed a bill requiring the Department of Public Lands to consult each respective mayor before taking any action on public lands in his or her municipality.

Fitial said the bill "impedes in the progress and development of the DPL and it violates the Constitution."

In his veto message to Senate President Pete P. Reyes and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, the governor said that requiring the DPL secretary to adhere to the mayors' position would only add another layer of bureaucracy in managing public lands.

He noted that the law, which created DPL, already provides a mechanism to ensure DPL complies with its fiduciary duties by providing for an advisory board that includes members from each municipality.

"Imposing this additional requirement on the DPL exposes both the mayors and the DPL to more fractured political considerations, which is clearly undesirable and an impediment on the DPL's progress and development," said Fitial.

He further argued that the measure violates the Constitution, which designates the management of public lands to the Executive Branch.

"The measure would change that constitutional mandate as it will allow the mayors to share management authority, which is in direct violation of the Constitution," said Fitial.

The disapproved bill would have required DPL to give the respective mayors a 20-day review and comment period before taking final action on lease, homestead, or any other decision concerning the use of public lands in the Commonwealth.

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Henry San Nicolas, is designed

to ensure that "due consideration [is given] to the position of each of the municipalities of Saipan, Rota, Tinian and Agiguan, and the Northern Islands with respect to proposed action affecting public lands in the respective municipality."

Public Lands Secretary John S. Del Rosario has opposed the proposal for the same reasons cited by the governor.

consider the appointment only because the CPA board is in dire need of members.

Meanwhile, the governor's spokesman, Charles Reyes, defended the Fitial administration's choice of nominees but had no direct comment on Torres' language.

"The governor is responding to an urgent request by the legislature for nominees to fill the CPA board and that's what he

provided," Reyes said. "It's up to the Senate to either reject or confirm them."

Reyes noted Waki's "experience" in business matters and "leadership qualities" as traits that warrant his nomination to the board. Similarly, he said Gov. Fitial wanted "to have someone with experience in the air transit industry" like Camacho on the board so that it could benefit from his

knowledge as a "stakeholder."

Torres's letter comes after the Senate earlier this week voted unanimously to confirm former Tinian Sen. Manuel Villagomez as an appointee to the CPA board. Villagomez joins former CPA chairman Joe Lifoifoi, who was asked to rescind his May 16 resignation and stay on the board. The remaining nominees yet to be confirmed are Miriam Seman, and Barry Tobbes.

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God Bless you all and have a great summer!



WIA WORKSHOP

Students listen to Department of Labor's Richard Hamilton during the Workforce Investment Agency's Summer Youth Employment Training Program workshop at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center Wednesday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

AIR FORCE

From Page 1

fied as Maj. Christopher M. Cooper, 33, aircraft commander; Maj. Brent D. Williams, 37, navigator; Capt. Michael K. Dodson, 31, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Joshua D. Shepherd, 25, navigator; 1st Lt. Robert D. Gerren, 32, electronic warfare officer; and Col. George Martin, 51, flight surgeon, who also was the deputy commander of 36th Medical Group at Andersen Air Force Base.

The bodies of Cooper and Williams were recovered, the Air Force said.

"Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the families of these airmen," said Col. Robert Wheeler, 2d Bomb Wing commander. "We appreciate the

military and civilian organizations who are continuing recovery efforts to bring our airmen home."

A panel of Air Force officers is investigating the crash.

The unarmed bomber crashed Monday during a swing around the island as part of Guam Liberation Day celebrations, marking the day when the U.S. military arrived to retake control of the island from Japan during World War II. The B-52 had been scheduled to conduct a flyover in a parade.

The Coast Guard, Navy, Air Force, National Guard and local agencies scoured more than 7,000 square miles of the Pacific in three days before suspending the search for survivors.

"It's extremely difficult to suspend this search," said Capt. Thomas Sparks,

commanding officer of the Coast Guard's Sector Guam. "Our hearts go out to the families of the victims and the entire Coast Guard grieves for their loss."

The crew was based at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. Flags were being flown at half-staff at the Louisiana state Capitol to honor them. They were deployed to Guam with the 20th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron as part of the U.S. military's continuous bomber presence mission in the Pacific.

The B-52 was carrying nearly 19,000 gallons of jet fuel when it crashed but the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association determined there was no threat to the environment because all or most of the fuel had burned, the Coast Guard said.

B-52s have been the backbone of the U.S. military's manned strategic

ERRATUM

In the article titled "Voter registration for '08 polls ongoing," published in the July 24, 2008, edition of the *Saipan Tribune*, the sentence that read "Previously registered voters who have filed to vote in 2007 regular general election must re-register to be eligible to vote in 2008 general election" should have stated "Previously registered voters who failed to vote in 2007 regular general election must re-register to be eligible to vote in 2008 general election." Our apologies.

NMI GETS

From Page 2

OIA officials before filling any position at the Labor Department and the AGO. The positions may only address critical labor, immigration, and law enforcement needs.

In addition, positions funded by the funds should be exempt from travel and hiring freezes, local government austerity holidays, and other cost-saving measures. If the CNMI government terminates any federally funded position or employee, it could lose the

remaining funds for that position.

These same terms were the reason the administration rejected the original \$420,000 labor initiative grant last year. At the time, Fitial called the grant conditions "unprecedented, unnecessary, and unproductive," and insisted that the grant be made on the same basis that it had been in the past.

But press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said yesterday the issues had been "resolved to the satisfaction of both the CNMI government and the Department of the Interior. The bottom line is, we have secured the money and it's going to help the CNMI."

warfare aircraft crashed into the ocean Feb. 12. Four crew members ejected from the aircraft and were rescued by helicopter.

Eleven days later, an Air Force B-2 crashed at Andersen shortly after takeoff in the first-ever crash of a stealth bomber. Both pilots ejected safely. The military estimated the cost of the loss of the aircraft at \$1.4 billion.

The Air Force's last crash involving a B-52 was also to perform for spectators.

On June 24, 1994, a bomber was practicing touch-and-go landings before an air show at Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington state when it plunged to the ground and exploded, killing all four on board, according to the Air Combat Command in Langley Air Force Base, Va.

age. According to AAA statistics, the national average for a gallon of regular gas on the mainland United States stood at \$4.02, a 4-cent decline from last month's average \$4.06. The national average one year ago was \$2.94. Alaska still has the highest prices on the mainland at \$4.69 per gallon.

sonal ebb and flow of the garment industry, according to Richard Pierce, chief trade advisor to Gov. Benigno Fitial, as the month historically has seen slight increases in garment exports.

User fee collections earned the Commonwealth more than \$35 million in 2001 but collections have diminished at a more or less steady since then. The steepest collection drop occurred from 2005, when the tax collected brought more than \$26 million to the Commonwealth, to 2007, when revenues totaled about \$13 million.

15 percent of eligible taxpayers may not have received their federal stimulus checks because of tax filing errors or complications, the Finance Department expects 100 percent of stimulus check payments will be made after all of the tax filing requirements are met.

Earlier this month, the Finance Department also began sending out checks for the federal child tax credit. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service granted a total of \$2.6 million for eligible families in the Commonwealth.

MOBIL

From Page 1

\$5.10 for full service, an 8-cent reduction. Diesel prices also slid by 9 cents to \$5.89. Premium gas prices fell to \$5.12 per gallon for self service and \$5.24 for

full service, a 9-cent and 7-cent drop respectively.

For now, the price reduction is confined only to Mobil stations, yet Shell stations historically have followed Mobil's price adjustments within a few days with corresponding changes.

The price decline comes as market

observers worldwide are noting slight drops in the per barrel price of oil after it reached record highs of \$147 last month. Crude oil prices slid \$3.09 Wednesday to settle at \$127.95 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Several experts attributed the drop to diminished consumption in the U.S.

market—a sign high gas prices had taken a toll on consumers—and eased fears over Hurricane Dolly, which was poised to pass over refineries in the Gulf of Mexico but later steered away from the region.

Meanwhile, the CNMI's gas prices are still far above the national aver-

ONWEL

From Page 1

a key CNMI Department of Labor official confirmed Thursday.

"Labor has received official notice from these two employers that they will be closing," Labor Director Barry Hirshbein said in an interview, citing letters the companies sent to the department earlier this week announcing their closures. "We have people out at those factories now meeting with management and staff."

UIC and Onwel representatives did not respond to several requests for comment.

News the two factories will soon shut their doors comes as the entire garment manufacturing industry on Saipan is facing a rapid demise due to rising production costs and a host of regulatory issues. This decline is evident in the diminished tax collections the government sees each year through so-called "user fees," export charges on shipments of garments, which have dropped by millions since the industry's height in the late 1990s.

UIC and Onwel, Hirshbein noted, have already told workers about the closures. Onwel's factory will shut down Aug. 21 but managers plan to pay workers for 60-days worth of work, Hirshbein said. UIC's notice, he added, says it will close by Sept. 21 but stops short of detailing any plans for paying workers.

The two factories employ hundreds of foreign and local workers. Foreign staff, Hirshbein noted, can apply with Labor to begin the process of transferring to a new job in the CNMI if they can find one and avoid repatriation to their home nations.

"This is going to have a really big impact on the guest workers," said Irene Tantiado, president of the United Coalition of Workers, a local labor organization. "I just hope the employers make sure there will be no problem like unpaid wages."

Meanwhile, the Commonwealth saw a 27 percent increase in user fee collections for the month of June over May's total, according to government statistics. June saw more than \$373,000 in fees collected, far less than the \$1.03 million seen in June 2007.

June's increase is due to the sea-

TAX

From Page 1

gible taxpayers are those with tax withholding that exceeded their tax liability for Tax Year 2007.

The distribution represents the first batch of tax refund payments to be mailed this week. More checks are expected to be released later.

Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos has said that about \$10 million to \$15 million in CNMI tax refunds

and rebates will be released for the previous tax year. The 2007 tax rebate checks will be mailed out in about two weeks.

"I have directed the Secretary of Finance to expedite the release of these tax refunds and rebates to help our struggling taxpayers and consumers cope with our economic downturn and our increasingly higher cost of living," Gov. Benigno R. Fitial was quoted as saying in a press release issued by the administration.

Fitial also expects the tax refund and rebate releases to have a positive effect on struggling small businesses.

The local refunds and rebates will be paid with "cover-over" funds that the CNMI government had recovered from the U.S. government.

Toward the end of 2007, the Commonwealth reached a settlement with U.S. Department of Treasury on the dispute over federal taxes that the U.S. government failed to transfer—or "cover over"—to the local government. The CNMI received \$26.4 million from the

settlement. Before that, the CNMI got \$6 million also in cover-over funds.

The administration has set the money aside for the payment of tax refunds and rebates, excluding it from the budget resources identified for government operations.

The release of the tax refunds comes on the heels of the distribution of federal "economic stimulus" checks, totaling \$16 million. Reyes quoted Inos as saying that 85 percent of the stimulus checks had now been issued to taxpayers. Although

Labor uncovers sponsorship arrangement

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Labor has uncovered an unlawful sponsorship deal after an alien worker disclosed he had worked only "one day" of his first year of employment on Saipan.

Labor also discovered that the worker, Kwang Qing, was unable to identify his employer or the location of his employment.

Labor administrative hearing officer Jerry Cody ruled that Qing's admission indicates the arrangement is an unlawful "sponsorship."

"Fraud is a serious matter that warrants imposing substantial penalties," said Cody in an administrative order issued Tuesday.

The hearing officer affirmed the Labor director's decision to deny Kwang Qing Corp.'s permit application to employ Kwang Qing. Cody denied Kwang Qing's request for transfer relief and ordered him to depart the CNMI within 20 days.

Kwang Qing's last employer on record, Kwang Qing Corp. was directed to provide Kwang Qing's repatriation ticket.

Cody recommended that the Labor director commence an agency case against the corporation's manager, Kwang Yong

Alien worker only worked one day, can't identify employer

Nian, for his apparent involvement in a scheme to obtain a fraudulent work permit for Kwang Qing to enter the CNMI.

Kwang Qing Corp. operates an Internet café called CK Internet in Chalan Kanoa. The corporation employs four foreign national workers. Majority of the corporation's officers are based in China.

Kwang Qing is the grandson of the corporation's president and son of its manager, Kwang Yong Nian.

On Oct. 25, 2007, the corporation submitted a permit transfer application to employ Kwang Qing as a commercial cleaner. Labor approved a conditional grant of transfer on the same day.

On March 10, 2008, Labor denied the application, stating that the employer's income did not justify the hiring.

The corporation and Kwang Qing appealed.

At the administrative hearing, the manager produced Business Gross Revenue Tax records for the first and second quarters of 2008.

The records showed that the company's 2008 earnings (\$16,820 and \$14,100 for the first

and second quarters) were sufficient to pay wages for four employees, including Kwang Qing.

In his order, Cody said further questioning of manager Kwan Nian revealed serious irregularities with the business.

Cody said the manager testified that receipts were issued to customers for only large purchases and even then, only to customers who requested a receipt.

The manager also testified that he kept employer's accounts receivables in his possession rather than depositing them in a bank.

The Labor director noted that this combination of factors—conducting sales without receipts and failing to regularly de-

posit revenue in a bank—made the BGRT figures impossible to verify and inherently suspect.

In effect, the manager could assert that he received any amount of revenue, as it is impossible to verify how much was actually received.

Cody discovered other problems in reviewing the application.

He noted that the manager testified that this small business employs one manager, two supervisors and a commercial cleaner.

However, Cody said, Kwang Qing testified that he does not work as commercial cleaner but as a computer attendant, helping customers at the Internet café.

Cody said this establishes

that the position of commercial cleaner is not actually being used and thus, "is not needed for this small business."

The hearing officer noted further that particular suspicion was raised regarding Kwang Qing's work history when he could not furnish the name of his last employer of record or even identify where the employment took place.

Cody said Kwang Qing's work permit was arranged by his father, Kwang Nian, while Kwang Qing was still in China.

Cody said Kwang Nian arranged for the work permit through a "friend," who was not identified at the hearing.

The hearing officer established that it is clear from Kwang Qing's testimony that no actual employment occurred.

Instead, Cody said, after entering the CNMI under a procured work permit, Kwang Qing spent the rest of the year studying English at the Northern Marianas College.

Cody agreed with the Labor director's position that transfer relief should be denied to Kwang Qing based on his fraudulent conduct in entering the CNMI and remaining for a year under an unlawful "sponsorship."

"The fact that this worker benefited from such a fraudulent scheme should be weighed against him with respect to his equitable claim for transfer relief," he said.

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PSS gets 'passing grade' for student retention

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System gets a passing grade for student retention numbers, PSS Commissioner Craig Garrison said.

"Overall, as a district, we are probably getting a B, B-plus in terms of retention, so we're doing a pretty good job," he said.

Garrison released some elementary retention numbers Thursday, but said a full report would be ready by the start of the school year.

The Board of Education asked for the report in order to review the district's progress, Garrison said.

"They wanted to see what elementaries have high or low retention rates," he said. "It will guide our efforts."

San Vicente Elementary had one of the highest numbers of students repeating grades at 15 but, Garrison said, San Vicente is academically challenging to students.

"That school is very disciplined in their approach to education, and as such, may be significantly challenging to move ahead," he added.

Joaquina Salas, acting San

Vicente principal, agrees with Garrison that the school's standards play a part in the student retention numbers.

The school does not simply look at academics to determine if a student moves up to the next grade level, she said. At-

tendance and reading levels are also considered.

"To be in line with No Child Left Behind, the reading level is a big component," she said.

Salas said San Vicente, with 766 students, is larger than some of the other schools with

lower numbers.

Garrison said the district has improved tremendously in the past 10 years because of No Child Left Behind coupled with more federal funding. Requirements for teachers have also been raised, he added.



SIX YEARS WITH RED CROSS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tan Holdings Corp. president Jerry Tan, center, was recently honored for completing six years as a Red Cross Board member. Jocelyn DL Guerrero, Human Resource chair, left, and board chair Larry Lee, right, present Tan with a plaque of appreciation for his dedication and commitment to the NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross. Tan has served on the board for six consecutive years. "Jerry has been an integral part of our board through his leadership and dedication to our mission of helping those in need," said Lee. Tan has assisted the Chapter in numerous fundraising efforts, including the annual Walkathon and Club 200. In 2003 he co-chaired Club 200, which was one of the most successful fundraisers in Chapter's 30-year history. Tan has also served on the Chapter finance and investment committees.



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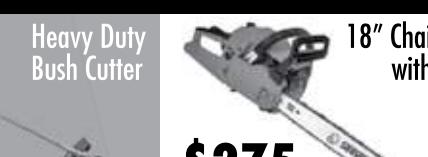
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A final tally of the 2007-2008 district retention numbers will be ready by the beginning of September, when teachers take part in two professional days before school starts.

"So we can get the best possible estimation of where we are, where we're going, so we can tell all you first grade teachers, all you second grade teachers, let's buck it up," he said.

House seeks Navy's aid with power crisis

The House of Representatives has adopted a resolution urging the U.S. Navy to help solve the power crisis in the Northern Marianas.

The resolution calls on Admiral Robert F. Willard, the commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, to help end the power outages that have plagued Saipan because of its aging power plant and the high cost of fuel.

"With the aid of the commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, the CNMI may be able to identify and acquire any surplus supply of affordable and reliable power generators or alternative sources of energy from the United States Department of Defense," states the resolution, sponsored by Representatives David M. Apatang and Justo S. Quitugua.

The resolution noted that the U.S. military has a stake in enhancing the quality of life for the people of the Commonwealth. The military controls some 17,800 acres of public land on

Tinian through a 50-year lease agreement with the CNMI government. The leased property is being eyed as a training area for the Marines that will soon be relocated from Okinawa to the Marianas region.

Earlier this week, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed into law a bailout bill for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. The measure provides CUC \$3.4 million to get rental generators and pay the utility's debts to two independent power producers on Saipan and Tinian.

CUC will use \$1.5 million as down payment for Aggreko International, which CUC hired to bring in temporary power to Saipan. The balance will go to pay CUC's debts: \$1.1 million to Pacific Marine Industrial Corp. and \$800,000 to Telesource CNMI. PMIC runs Power Plant 4, which produces almost half of Saipan's current power generation capacity. Telesource operates the power plant on Tinian. (Agnes E. Donato)

Doromal visits Saipan again

Human rights advocate Wendy L. Doromal will soon return to Saipan for a vacation and to meet local alien workers.

Doromal and her daughter, who are based in Florida, are expected to arrive on the island today at 1:30am.

Human Dignity Movement president Jerry Custodio said they would hold a welcome party for Doromal and her daughter Nani Saturday at Garapan Central Park at 6pm.

Custodio noted that while here for vacation, Doromal also plans to meet foreign national workers on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

He said Doromal is interested in interviewing any worker with special concerns and problems with respect to their immigration status and other labor issues.

Custodio is inviting alien workers of all nationalities to at-

tend the "pot luck party."

"Doromal has been helping the nonresident workers attain improved immigration status and social justice," Custodio said.

Rabby Sayed, president of Saipan Taxi Association, encouraged all Bangladeshi, Nepalese, Sri Lankan and Indian nationals to participate in the event.

The Human Dignity Movement, the Coalition of United Workers and the Bangladeshi community are organizing the party.

In December 2007 Doromal flew from Florida to join the Unity March organized by then Representative-elect Tina Sablan. Doromal then launched a letter writing campaign to press U.S. Congress the act on the call for improved immigration status for long-term alien workers in the CNMI. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Man found guilty of soliciting marriage fraud

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Munna Miah, a mason, was found guilty yesterday of soliciting marriage fraud. The same jury acquitted the 38-year-old Miah of charges of conspiring with other persons to commit marriage fraud.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman ordered the Adult Probation Office to prepare a pre-sentence report. Miah will be sentenced on Sept. 17, 2008, at 9am.

Assistant attorney general

Melissa Simms said the jury made the right decision.

"They found Mr. Miah guilty of solicitation. They found him not guilty of conspiracy...obviously we would like a guilty verdict on this count. We felt the evidence was there, but we respect the jury's verdict and their decision. I know that they worked diligently and spent a lot of time to come up with that verdict," Simms said.

Defense counsel Stephen Woodruff told reporters that they naturally disagree with the jury's decision.

"This is an exceptional jury. I give them a lot of credit for how hard they worked. They sent various questions to the judge during the course of the case," he said.

Woodruff said the jurors were deadlocked yesterday morning and reported they were unable to reach a verdict.

This prompted the judge to remind the jurors of the importance of reaching a verdict. The jurors then returned to the deliberation room.

"We do feel that the evidence is inadequate, that Mr. Miah did not solicit Severene Kosam to commit the offense of marriage fraud, which is what that second count is," the lawyer said.

Woodruff said that case re-

cords will be reviewed in determining whether or not post trial motions or an appeal will be necessary.

"One of the things that I told [the jury] during my closing arguments was that Mr. Miah is a victim in this case," he said.

Woodruff said Miah did not have any intention to commit marriage fraud. "He wanted to get married but he wanted to get married legally. Now of course, he wanted to be able to get his [immediate relative or labor] permit afterwards. He was worried about his problems with his permit, but it was not his intention to violate the law," he said.

What happened in this case, Woodruff said, was a great deal of government involvement in

the manner in which Miah was led to submit a marriage license application.

"And it's my view that it was actually the government agent or the undercover informant that was soliciting Mr. Miah, not the other way around. The jury obviously concluded it otherwise so we have to look that carefully," he said.

Woodruff said Miah wanted an actual marriage as well as a permit and "that's not illegal."

Maria Aurelio Ray, Muhammad Saiful Islam and Minto Minto were charged with one count of conspiracy to commit marriage fraud and one count of solicitation.

Last May, the jury found Ray guilty of two counts of conspiracy to commit marriage fraud,

but acquitted her on two counts of solicitation. Ray will be sentenced July 31, 2008, at 9am.

The jury trial for Islam was set for July 21, but the *Saipan Tribune* learned that the defendant fled to Bangladesh before the trial could take place.

Minto's trial is scheduled for Aug. 11.

According to the charging information, in March 2007 Ray, Islam and Minto unlawfully agreed that Islam would marry Alisilynn Mallens for the sole purpose of obtaining labor and immigration benefits.

Also in March 2007, Ray, Miah and Minto allegedly conspired that Miah would marry Severene Kosam for the purpose of obtaining labor and immigration benefits.

CUC LOAD SHEDDING SCHEDULE

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that as the rehabilitation and maintenance repairs continue on the engines and generators at the Power Plant 1, the load shedding schedule for July 26 through August 1, 2008, will be as follows:

8am - 10am	Feeder-2: Second Partial Fishing Base south to San Jose Intersection
10am - 12pm	Kiya-4: Second Partial Susupe, Mount Carmel south to portions of Chalan Kanoa and Chalan Kiya Village
12pm - 2pm	Feeder-4: Second Partial Capitol Hill, As Teo, Kagman and portions of Papago
2pm - 4pm	Feeder-1: Second & Third Partial 99 Cents Store and portions of Garapan and Upper Navy Hill, Annaks Condominiums
4pm - 6pm	Feeder-7: Entire Grid Lower Base industrial area, north to Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, As Matusi and Marpi
6pm - 8pm	Kiya-1: First Partial Kannat Tabla, Botanical Garden, San Vicente, Dandan, Airport Road, Isley Field, Lower Dandan
8pm - 10pm	Kiya-2: Second Partial Koblerville, As Gonno, San Antonio and Afetnas

The first partial in each of the respective feeder/kiya could be included to the schedule should the second partial be insufficient. Water and wastewater services will also be affected in the respective areas as a result of the power outages. CUC will make all efforts to keep to this schedule but may be modified in future public notices. This schedule may also be altered to address particular emergencies when necessary. (CUC)

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on August 7, 2008 at 6:00 pm. at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Building, Susupe. The public is invited to attend. The agenda will include:

- A. Preliminary Matters: Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes, Communications
- B. Reports: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Administrator, Committees, Legal Counsel
- C. Public Hearings. None
- D. Contested Cases. None
- E. Permits and Related Actions - Review and Decide
 - 1. 2008-0908 A. Vekhov, preliminary plat, lot TR 2045/08 and TR 2044/08
 - 2. 2008-1197 Jesus G. Villagomez preliminary plat, lot H34NEW
- F. Old Business
 - 1. Review and approve amendments to the Official Saipan Zoning Maps.
 - i. Map 29, Lot 043 L 89 Hayden Corp. rezone from Rural to Industrial
 - ii. Map 03, Lot 036 A 04 Buddhist Temple Assn. rezone from Rural to Village Commercial
 - 2. 2008-0302 LaoLao Golftel - review progress on permit conditions
- G. New Business.
 - 1. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment.
 - 2. Discussion about Zoning Office operations
- H. Public Comment
- I. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with legal counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters
- J. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Steve Tilley, Zoning Administrator at 234-9663. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.). /s/ Henry S. Hofsneider, Chair.

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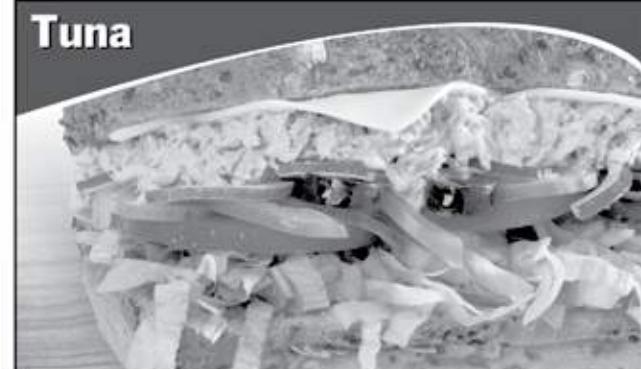
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DOC uses own budget to fix ACs

Contractor fails to rectify air-con problem

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Corrections used its own budget to fix five of the nine air-conditioning compressors that broke due to frequent power outages at the new prison.

Department of Corrections Commissioner Lino S. Tenorio told the *Saipan Tribune* that the compressors had already been repaired by a local company paid with the department's own funds because the main contractor was unavailable.

"We've been waiting and waiting so we went ahead and side contracted to a local company here to fix [the com-

pressors] for us," Tenorio said.

The commissioner said the funds used to fix the compressors came from the department's own budget.

Tenorio said the original contractor will be dealt with later. He said he believes that the Attorney General's Office is now working to address the issue.

Tenorio said the problem could not wait because inmates needed to be transferred to the new prison.

"Because we have some money set aside, we were able to pull that off," said the com-

missioner, referring to the repair of the compressors.

Last April, Tenorio disclosed that power fluctuations broke three air-conditioning compressors within the past three months.

He said another compressor broke last March, while the fifth died in April.

The four remaining air-conditioners could only partially accommodate the department's administration office and one or two of the housing structures.

Tenorio earlier said they are trying to get the Department of Public Works to act on the prob-

lem so the compressors can be fixed by the department's main contractor, Telesource.

Tenorio also noted that because the warranties on the units have not expired, Telesource should fix the problems immediately.

All 131 inmates were finally moved to the new Susupe prison on July 10.

Construction on the 100,000 square-foot lot in Susupe commenced in 2002. The first target opening date was in 2006. Contractual issues reportedly caused the opening's long delay. The prison finally opened in February.

The target transfer date was later set for the end of April but was delayed by the broken compressors.



Tenorio

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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

July 25, 2000

All rebates out by next month

Owing it to the automation of the Northern Marianas tax system which fast-tracks processing of all revenue and duty transactions, the Department of Finance yesterday assured that all rebate and refund checks should be mailed out before the end of next month. However, acting Revenue and Taxation Director Dora S. Taiting-fong said the anticipated release of approximately 37,000 rebate and refund checks by August will be realized if the finance department system would not encounter software-related difficulties.

Fed housing programs extended to NMI residents

Northern Marianas residents wishing to own their own home but could not qualify under existing local programs may now get their chance through the implementation of two federal housing programs on the islands, Commonwealth Development Authority Board Chair John S. Tenorio said. The United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Office has earmarked \$1 million in initial guaranteed loan packages for Saipan residents, according to Mr. Tenorio.

DPS told to step up fight against pornography

The sponsor of the recently-signed law against pornography has urged the Department of Public Safety to beef up its enforcement in areas notorious for such establishments, particularly in the Garapan tourist district. Rep. Malua T. Peter, chair of the House Committee on Health and Welfare, expressed gratitude to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio for approving her measure which she had been pushing since 1995.

July 25, 2001

CNMI shines in Japan

The Northern Marianas made front page news in Japan over the weekend when one of the country's widely-circulated print publications covered a ceremony honoring Japanese leader Daisaku Ikeda, who was bestowed an honorary professorship by the Northern Marianas College. The recognition ceremony, attended by Japanese, NMC and CNMI officials, received extensive media coverage in the Soka Gakkai International newspaper's July 20, 2001 edition.

DYS reports 250 juvenile cases in first half of 2001

The Division of Youth Services yesterday reported another increase in the number of minors involved in various criminal offenses, with more than 250 juvenile delinquency cases recorded in the last six months. In efforts to deter the continued rise in youthful offenses, Juvenile Probation Supervisor Syl S. Ada Jr. said an effective preventive strategy has been implemented. Ada said alternative activities to engage youths during school breaks are ongoing, noting that these should turn aside the minors' attention from vices.

\$1M released to pay off-island referral billings

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund has decided to go ahead with its plan to loan \$1 million to the Group Health and Life Insurance as seed money for a trust fund that would be used to pay for off-island medical referral billings. The Fund's Board of Trustees agreed to go ahead with the \$1-million loan, subject to the approval of the Legislature, during Friday's board meeting at the conference room of the Tinian Casino and Gaming Control Commission on Tinian Island.

July 24, 2002

Housing vouchers for jobless soars

The number of housing voucher recipients dramatically increased since the September 11 attacks and continues to rise in 2002 due to the persisting economic crisis in the Northern Marianas. Northern Marianas Housing Corporation officials saw an increase on the number of applicants for the Urban Development Section 8 Voucher Program from the latter part of 2001 all the way to 2002, due to rising unemployment in the Commonwealth.

Babauta vows aid package for Rota

Gov. Juan N. Babauta has promised to come up with an assistance package for Rota's agricultural sector, even as the island's local government patiently await federal assistance from Washington D.C. In the meantime, the Rota Legislative Delegation is exploring other means of assistance, including tapping the aid of the Commonwealth Development Authority, which could give micro-loans to Rota's farmers and fishermen to get them back on their feet.

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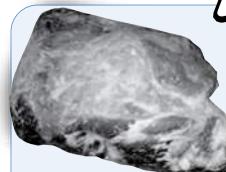
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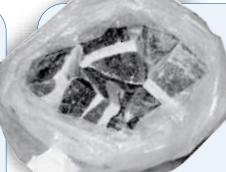
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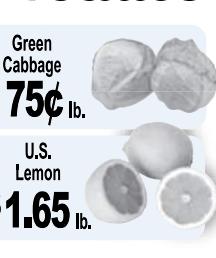
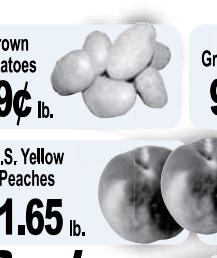
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Letters to the Editor

False statements vs A. Samoa's tuna industry

To Gov. Togiola T.A. Tulafono
Governor of American Samoa

Thank you for your recent constructive statements in the media raising concerns about legislation by the Delegate in Washington, D.C., which would negatively impact American Samoa's tuna industry. We also appreciate the Fono President and Speaker for speaking-out about serious substantive problems in the bill and the lack of any consultation with the Islands' leaders. On behalf of the United States Tunaboot Owners Coalition (USTOC), an ad hoc group representing the Pago Pago-based tuna fleet, I want to take this opportunity to express our concerns with the Delegate's bill.

Unfortunately, the Delegate recently made false and inaccurate statements regarding American Samoa's tuna fishing industry as reported in the June 20, 2008, Samoa News. Mr. Faleomavaega's criticisms of the Pago-based tuna fleet are a smoke-screen to hide from the public his legislation to give away American Samoa's valuable ship-building entitlement and the exclusive right of U.S.-built boats to fish in neighboring U.S. Pacific Islands' waters. His foreign-built boats can then take fish from those areas without any guarantee that they will bring their catch to American Samoa's canneries.

Faleomavaega quietly introduced his give-away provision, H.R. 3669, last September 26, 2007. It is telling that Faleomavaega's little secret bill had no co-sponsor, no hearing in Washington or American Samoa, nor was it ever voted upon in the subcommittee or full committee of jurisdiction. Instead, Faleomavaega's gift to his foreign friends was silently inserted into the House Coast Guard Authorization Act, H.R. 2830, in April, 2008. In fact, the Delegate did not have the courtesy to discuss his plan and the harmful impact on our tuna fleet or the economy of the Territory we both call home.

It is shocking to discover that Faleomavaega's provision gives foreign-built boats, without any apparent payment, the right to fish in the vast waters around the U.S. islands north of Samoa: Baker, Howland, Jarvis, Johnston, Kingman Reef, Palmyra Atoll, and Wake Island. Fishing in these islands' waters is currently reserved under law for boats built under the U.S. flag, including of course, American Samoa. The Delegate drastically understates the number of boats in the U.S. tuna fleet to justify his scheme to allow Asian-built boats to take fish in our waters and undermine American Samoa's ship-building potential.

Contrary to the Delegate's arithmetic, most of the 40 U.S. licenses to fish for tuna under the South Pacific Fisheries Treaty have been issued. There are currently 26 boats in the U.S. tuna fleet and

An appeal for support

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the central committee of the Democratic Party for their endorsement of my candidacy for the non-voting delegate seat this upcoming November election. It is an honor to be able to run for this very important position and to be able to represent our people of the CNMI in the halls of Congress. The Democratic Party, along with all my supporters from Tinian, Rota, Saipan, and the Northern Marianas Islands, join me in inviting everyone to participate in this very historic election in November.

I was often asked why I am running under the Democratic banner. My response to this question is that I am a Democrat and that is my political ideology. I grew up with my parents in the popular party of the CNMI, which later became the CNMI Democratic Party. I also often asked my parents then why we were in the popular party. Their response then was that we were farmers

Our country's Asia-Pacific role

There's the slip into the inconvenient ditch of soul-searching trying to define the role of the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific region. Just as I threw in the white towel I came across an explanation of this very issue in the book *Asian Values-Western Dreams* by Greg Sheridan.

He explained the United States' role in Asia and the Pacific as basically one of security. Because of its unmatched naval firepower in Asia and the Pacific, it must keep its presence here. This is to ensure stable relationships between Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and China. Instructive policies are analyzed and issued to CINCPAC Office in Hawaii for implementation.

After the Cold War, the U.S. left much of sovereign dispositions to leaders in Asia. It finally left the Philippines—a huge naval and air force base—by giving the issue of disposition to the Philippines' bicameral national legislature. It died in the Senate and the proposal—with or without approval from the Philippines—was carried forward.

The decision by the U.S. to leave the Philippines was a major

at least another 8 are expected to join between now and next year. There is a real opportunity for new U.S.-built tuna boats.

As your Economic Advisory Council recently reported, a ship repair and building industry has the potential to create new high paying jobs and expand American Samoa's economy. A key attraction for investment in the Islands' ship-building industry is that all tuna boats built in Pago may apply for a U.S. fishery endorsement and have the exclusive right to fish in the EEZs of the remote Pacific island areas. Giving away U.S. fishery endorsements to foreign-built boats will nullify the most important investment incentive for the American Samoa ship-building industry.

Also, contrary to Faleomavaega's assertions, virtually all of our Pago-based boats deliver our tuna fish to American Samoa canneries. I am sure you have been watching for many years our boats going out and returning to deliver fish to American Samoa's canneries. Therefore, you may be aware that our Pago-based boats have contracts with the canneries to deliver our catch, which obviates the need for contracts with the American Samoa Government that has no canneries. Our boats use the latest technologies and monitoring procedures to insure tuna is dolphin-safe and to eliminate any adverse by-catch. You can be certain we always feel proud and fortunate to return home from grueling long-distance fishing to one of the finest, peaceful, deepwater ports in the Pacific—where the American flag flies.

Regrettably, to our dismay, the newest licensed tuna boats in the fleet, not based in Pago, have been catching fish all year, and to our knowledge, have not brought any fish to the canneries. This is not surprising, as they have no contract with the canneries, nor have they hired anyone from American Samoa. This established pattern is alarming as it demonstrates that under the Delegate's bill there is no guarantee that foreign-built boats will deliver their catch to the canneries in Pago or employ any people from American Samoa, especially since they have contracts elsewhere and would be free to tranship their fish to a mother ship and ignore our labor and environmental standards.

The Delegate also blatantly mischaracterizes the genesis of the current tuna treaty and the contributions of the Pago-based fleet. The fact is we can all be proud of the South Pacific Tuna Treaty (SPTT) as a major U.S. diplomatic and economic success, which was spurred by efforts of the U.S. tuna fleet to supply American Samoa canneries while fully complying with U.S. and international law.

In 1984, prior to the formation of the SPTT, one of the Pago-

and fishermen and most of the time poor and we fit right into this party. Back then, this party stood for the poor and the working class and it also stood up for the rights of all those whose voices cannot be heard by the ruling party. It is through this upbringing and education from both of my parents that got me interested in government. I sometimes recall my early childhood years when I would often listen to our half-broken transistor radio at the farm and listen to then President John F. Kennedy deliver his famous speech "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." This is the speech, along with my parent's beliefs, that really inspired me to join politics, which ultimately became my lifelong career.

I do understand that the CNMI Democratic Party today need a lot of reorganizing and has a lot of work to do in the days ahead and this just gives me more energy to do just that so we can again

signal to sovereign countries in the region that final disposition of matters of state is in their hands. It's a good policy decision that took awhile for local digestion as they carried the brunt of decision-making themselves. Essentially, the U.S. placed prominence in the interest of governance among countries in this part of the world at solidification of nation building.

I would think that leaving decision-making to local leadership would descend in similar fashion with respect to the CNMI's rights of governance to exercise greater degree of self-government. It's a logical progression of policy transfer.

Obviously, the powerful though atrophied unbridled few staffers on Capitol Hill and Pennsylvania Avenue have allowed their distracted bosses to overlook what they have crafted into the federalization of labor and immigration. The hasty policies leave a nasty vacuum—no financial cushion to cover the annihilating effects of the new policies. It's déjà vu once more confirming the lack of expertise on the part of atrophied congressional and administration

based boats, the Jeanette-Diana, was seized while *legally* transiting consistent with U.S. law, outside of the 12-mile territorial waters of the Solomon Islands. Ultimately the ship was released, as it was recognized the ship had been in full compliance with U.S. law. However, to prevent further disruption to American Samoa's tuna industry and boats, the U.S. and 16 Pacific Island countries entered into the SPTT that serves as the basis for American Samoa's tuna fishing industry.

The Delegate further obscures the effect of his give-away legislation, by opposing fishing by his Asian-built boats in American Samoa's 200-mile EEZ, and proposing to offset their loss of not fishing around American Samoa by granting the foreign boats the right to fish in the U.S. remote Pacific Islands. Thankfully Faleomavaega has no authority to unilaterally make such a trade,

particularly as it puts at risk the amount of tuna delivered to the canneries and American Samoa's shipbuilding potential.

In addition, Faleomavaega's proposed 100-mile fishing ban around American Samoa for all Pago-based boats shows he is out of touch with American Samoa's tuna industry. Our Pago-based boats currently follow the 50-mile limit on fishing or gear-testing, even though it is harsh on the environment as gear-testing over 50-miles out and then back requires burning excessive amounts of fuel. The Pago-based boats actually only occasionally fish for tuna in American Samoa's EEZs. Primarily, they chase the highly migratory tuna up around the remote U.S. islands, before bringing them back to the canneries in our home port in American Samoa.

As you may know, many of the Pago-based boats have relations with American Samoa that go back over 40 years. We consider this our home and have developed deep ties with many employees, friends, and people in the community. We consider the millions of dollars spent locally on fuel, supplies, services, and fees and taxes as an investment in our collective future.

Your recent support of the canneries and initiatives to expand American Samoa's economy is appreciated and welcomed by Pago-based tuna fishing vessels. It is our hope that many new tuna fishing vessels will be built and commissioned here in American Samoa. However, to preserve that vision, we urge you to oppose the Delegate's give-away provision pending in Congress. The future of American Samoa's tuna fishing industry, canneries, and economy depends on it.

Joe Finete

Chairman, U.S. Tunaboot Owners Coalition

and fisherman and most of the time poor and we fit right into this party. Back then, this party stood for the poor and the working class and it also stood up for the rights of all those whose voices cannot be heard by the ruling party. It is through this upbringing and education from both of my parents that got me interested in government. I sometimes recall my early childhood years when I would often listen to our half-broken transistor radio at the farm and listen to then President John F. Kennedy deliver his famous speech "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." This is the speech, along with my parent's beliefs, that really inspired me to join politics, which ultimately became my lifelong career.

My 12 years in the Senate of being fair to all islands and my record in voting decisively on issues important to everyone in our Commonwealth regardless whether it is unpopular among my colleague politicians may be a plus in this Commonwealth-wide election. I ask all people of our Commonwealth for their support and I sincerely hope that being from the beautiful island of Tinian would not be seen as a negative to my candidacy.

Lastly, again I ask for your support in November and from time to time until Election Day, I will be appearing before you to discuss issues that affect all of us here in the Commonwealth.

David M. Cing

Tinian

staffers to provide the tools necessary to implement new policies, realistically. It's a sink-or-swim situation.

Increased federal role would bump against the interest of local governance. If the impending economic annihilation is any indication of what the arrogant and unbridled few could inflict here, imagine dealing with the staff of various committees and subcommittees of the U.S. Congress, departments in the federal government or the thousands of agencies who must give their approval before we do anything out here.

It's insane and economic destruction or annihilation isn't necessarily knocking on our door. It's already ravaging everything it finds in our living room! The planned lawsuit is the only sure-fire way to bring these destructive issues to justice in the interest of local governance.

John Del Rosario

Koblerville, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. Southeast winds around 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼77°	▲89° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼78
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼73
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼46
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲92	▼75
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲92	▼81
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲83	▼76
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲79	▼57
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲85	▼66
Manila	Showers	▲86	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼48
Miami	Thundershowers	▲90	▼79
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼72
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲93	▼76
Paris	Cloudy	▲87	▼61
Pusan	Cloudy	▲88	▼74
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼66
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲82	▼52
San Francisco	Sunny	▲74	▼55
Seoul	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼74
Tokyo	Showers	▲88	▼77
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼72

Tides

Saipan Harbor	
6:53AM Today	Low Tide: 0.4 Feet
12:43PM Today	High Tide: 1.4 Feet
6:19PM Today	Low Tide: 0.7 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

	Today	5:58AM	6:49 PM	Today	11:30PM	11:38AM
	Saturday	5:58AM	6:49 PM	Saturday		12:36AM
	Sunday	5:58AM	6:49 PM	Sunday	12:17AM	1:38PM
	Monday	5:58AM	6:48 PM	Monday	1:10AM	2:43PM
	Tuesday	5:59AM	6:48 PM	Tuesday	2:10AM	3:49PM

Moonrise/Moonset

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

■ **ISLAND SNAPSHTOS**
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

■ **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

■ **BUSINESS**
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

■ **SAMUT SARI**
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

■ **TRAVELOGUE**
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

■ **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

■ **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan.

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747.

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 18, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO 9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily

CO 9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6

CO 9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota

CO 9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily

CO 9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily

CO 9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily

CO 9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily

CO 9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily

CO 9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota

CO 9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7

CO 9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily

CO 9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily

CO 9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099 5:00am 7:40am Daily

NW 078 8:55am 2:00pm Daily

NW 075 4:45pm 7:25pm Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076 10:15am 2:55pm Daily

NW 077 6:25pm 1:30am+1 Daily

NW 100 8:45pm 1:25am+1 Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083 4:20pm 7:05pm Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084 10:30am 3:05pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:55am 11:35am Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077 9:00pm 1:30am+1 Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604 2:20am 6:00am 1

OZ 604 2:50am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7

OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7

OZ 603 7:40pm 1:10am+1 7

OZ 603 8:10pm 1:40am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap

CO 891 6:30am 8:05am 6

CO 892 9:45

Sablan gets White House award

Standing proudly with First Lady Laura Bush, the CNMI's own SPC Vera Sablan received an award for exemplary performance during the White House Communications Agency's 19th Annual Awards Ceremony on Monday, July 21, 2008. Sablan, one of 23 awardees, was selected from over 900 active duty service members assigned to the Agency to be honored for outstanding dedication and exemplary performance for providing superb communications to the President, Vice President and their staff.

Sablan serves with the 3rd Presidential Communications Command of WHCA and is the unit's human resources manager. In that capacity, she meticulously proofed, generated, reviewed and screened 485 evaluations, awards, official memoranda and personnel correspondence for the 75 Joint Service personnel assigned, maintaining a 98 per-

cent suspense rate.

Sablan, a self-motivated soldier, displayed outstanding use of automation skills by maintaining and updating the unit website, providing historical records of unit functions, training issues, leave and personnel actions. She is involved in numerous community affairs and volunteer work committed to keeping young people off the streets, enabling them to become more valuable and productive members of our society.

Sablan is the daughter of retired U.S. Army Sergeant Major Ramon Sablan and Lucy Sablan of Saipan.

The White House Communications Agency, originally known as the White House Signal Detachment, was officially formed by the War Department in March 1942 during the Roosevelt administration. The detachment was activated

under the Military District of Washington to provide normal and emergency communication in support of the President. The Agency has evolved over the past 66 years from a small team of 32 personnel working out of the basement of the White House to a self-supporting joint service command. The headquarters for WHCA are located at the Anacostia Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. and consist of seven staff elements and six operational units.

CNMI Resident Representative Pete A. Tenorio, who was at the ceremony, said, "I am proud to witness this historic event of a soldier from the CNMI receiving an award from the First Lady for exemplary performance in the service to our country. Our citizens join me in extending our congratulations and best wishes to SPC Sablan for her wonderful achievement and for bringing honor and pride to herself, her family and to our Commonwealth." (PR)



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This Promotion is valid for the month of July 2008 only.

SHOW TIME:

1st Show: 7:00pm

2nd Show: 8:45pm

Call TODAY at 233-8585
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For CNMI Residents Only. Local ID Required.



2004 RAV-4 4DR. 4WD

Auto, Beige, Stock: U07-007T

License: ACB-455

Mileage: 41649

Price: \$15,699

**REDUCED PRICE
\$14,999**



USED CARS

STOCK	YEAR	MODEL	TRANS.	MILEAGE	COLOR	LICENSE #	PRICE	REDUCED PRICE
TOYOTA SEDANS								
R08-011F	2007	YARIS 4DR	AUTO	65940	SILVER	ACC-154	\$11,399	
R08-008F	2006	CAMRY LE 4DR	AUTO	18576	BEIGE	ADN-161	\$15,999	
U08-043P	2000	CELICA 2DR	MANUAL	72097	BLUE	ABZ-838	\$7,999	

GM CARS

R08-005F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	114073	BLUE	ACB-544	\$6,999	
R07-013F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	39164	ORANGE	AD0-022	\$9,599	\$7,599
R07-023F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	32635	WHITE	ABX-679	\$9,599	\$7,599
U08-032R	2005	EPICA 4DR SEDAN	AUTO	27339	WHITE	ACD-506	\$8,699	
U08-033R	2005	EPICA 4DR SEDAN	AUTO	21118	BEIGE	ACD-486	\$8,699	
R07-034F	2005	OPTRA 4DR.	AUTO	14592	SILVER	ACD-020	\$10,099	\$9,499

LEXUS

R08-003F	2003	LEXUS LS430	AUTO	54477	IVORY	ADU-502	\$20,999	\$28,999
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TOYOTA TRUCKS

R07-038F	2004	TACOMA 4X2 XTRACAB	AUTO	49609	BEIGE	ABV-159	\$11,999	\$10,999
U08-014P	2004	TACOMA 4X2	MANUAL	44000	WHITE	ACA-948	\$12,499	\$11,999

OTHER CARS & TRUCKS

U07-106P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	53147	SILVER	ADF-401	\$8,999	\$7,999
U07-107P	2004	HONDA CIVIC DX DR.	AUTO	48755	SILVER	ADF-421	\$8,999	\$7,999
U07-034T	2000	NISSAN MAXIMA GXE 4DR.	AUTO	68648	WHITE	ACT-812	\$10,999	\$8,399
U07-104T	2003	NISSAN MURANO SE	AUTO	32000	PEWT	ABZ-615	\$16,799	\$15,299
U08-035T	2000	NISSAN ALTIMA GXE 4DR SDN	AUTO	64846	GREEN	ABS-748	\$6,999	
U08-038T	2001	MITS MONTERO WGN	AUTO	93155	BEIGE	CVS-88	\$7,999	
U07-095T	1999	MAZDA MILLENIA 4DR.SEDAN	AUTO	91014	SILVER	ABP-583	\$7,999	\$7,099

GM SPORT UTILITY

U08-036T	2002	TRAILBLAZER 4WD	AUTO	36460	RED	ACB-993	\$9,999	
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SPORT UTILITY

U07-064T	2001	4RUNNER 4WD	AUTO	56882	CHAMPAIGNE	ABY-153	\$14,599	\$12,599
U07-050T	2002	RAV4 4DR 4WD	AUTO	39182	WHITE	ABW-677	\$13,699	\$12,799
U07-007T	2004	RAV4 4DR. 4WD	AUTO	41649	BEIGE	ACB-455	\$15,699	\$14,999
R08-007F	2006	RAV4 4DR 2WD LTD	AUTO	20311	WHITE	ACE-344	\$19,185	\$19,099



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Marianas Trench Marine Monument

FACT SHEET

What is a monument? The word "monument" has a special meaning under an act of Congress known as the Antiquities Act of 1906. There it means a historic landmark, structure, or other place of historic or scientific interest located on federal land. The Grand Canyon in Arizona is the most famous; the most recent is the one in the western Hawaiian Islands.

What is the Marianas Trench Marine Monument? Right now, it is only a proposition. If approved (by the President), it would be that part of the ocean that surrounds the three northernmost islands of the CNMI, Maug, Asuncion and Uracas.

Why should that become a monument? The biggest reason: to provide protection and offer sanctuary to at least a part of the world's ocean and its marine life, which is being damaged by pollution, illegal fishing, and over-fishing. Another reason: to fulfill the Micronesian Challenge, issued by Palau's President Remengsau, to conserve 30% of the region's near shore resources and 20% of its terrestrial resources by 2020. A third reason, and the one that is creating the urgency, is that President Bush wants to create another marine monument, like the one he created in Hawaii, before he leaves office in January 2009.

How does a monument like that get created? Under the Antiquities Act, all it takes is for the President to sign a document declaring an area a national monument. Under this Act, such a declaration does not require approval from Congress.

What happens once an area is declared a national monument? Agencies of the federal government, here primarily the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and its Division of National Ocean Service together with representatives from the CNMI government and the public would get together to work out rules and regulations for governing the Marianas Trench Marine Monument.

How would the monument affect the CNMI? Establishing the area as a sanctuary would offer scientists, researchers an opportunity to study the unique biology and geology of the Marianas Trench, the meeting of part of the Pacific and Philippine tectonic plates, the many life forms found near underwater hot spots. It would also be very attractive to tourists and to the media, so all told would bring in a lot of additional visitors - which would be good for the economy.

In addition, it would also bring in a steady stream of federal money, since as a national monument, its upkeep, protection, maintenance, etc., would be paid for by the federal government. A visitor's center would be built on Saipan, and that would also bring in more visitors and therefore more revenue.

(to be continued)

Brought to you by the Friends of the Marianas Trench Marine Monument.

KICKOFF & RALLY KICKOFF & RALLY KICKOFF & RALLY

For Delegate Candidate

JUAN TUDELA LIZAMA

Garapan Fishing Base,
across from the Horiguchi Building
and Kristo Rai Church in Garapan

Saturday, July 26, 11:00 am-3:00 pm

F Do not miss your opportunity to meet Juan Tudela Lizama
and hear his vision and goals for the CNMI if elected
YOUR U.S. Congressional Non-Voting Delegate.



**Lizama
for all!**

Paid for and approved by the Committee to Elect Juan Tudela Lizama

KICKOFF & RALLY

KICKOFF & RALLY

KICKOFF & RALLY

5 Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on five beach sites on Saipan and is warning the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

The affected sites are DPW Channel Bridge, South Puerto Rico Dump, American Memorial Park, Hafa Adai Drainage, and Sugar Dock.

The division said water samples taken from these sites contained concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria—enterococci—that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

The division also analyzed water samples from Tinian's recreational beaches and storm water drains and none of the samples contained excessive

concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria. DEQ assigned a green flag on all of the sampled beach sites on Tinian.

DEQ analyzes water from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainages every

Wednesday. This week it took samples taken from 38 locations on Saipan's coast. On Tinian, the division analyzed samples from 10 locations. For more information, call DEQ at 664-8500. **(DEQ)**



CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Christopher Caliwan for completing your Basic Training for the U.S. Marine Corp. Good luck on your next assignment. We wish you safety and good health. God bless you. From Dad Lito, Mom Roxy, family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Joeten Motors *Certified**
USED CARS

DEALS OF THE WEEK

2005 Nissan Sentra STOCK # 5L513530 \$11,995⁰⁰*	2005 Nissan Murano AWD STOCK # 5W414457 \$18,995⁰⁰	2005 Honda Pilot 4x4 STOCK # 5H528401 \$24,995⁰⁰
1999 Volkswagen Beetle STOCK # XM464684 \$6,995⁰⁰*	2006 Honda Civic DX STOCK # 6L023683 \$13,995⁰⁰*	2003 Kia Sorento LX STOCK # 35176610 \$9,995⁰⁰
1999 Toyota 4Runner 4x4 STOCK # X0221184 \$9,995⁰⁰*	2004 Honda Civic DX STOCK # 4H606499 \$12,995⁰⁰*	2005 Ford Mustang STOCK # 55105436 \$23,995⁰⁰
2005 Ford Ranger STOCK # 5PA78255 \$12,995⁰⁰*	2005 Honda Accord EX STOCK # 5A068921 \$18,995⁰⁰*	2005 Nissan Pathfinder SE 4x4 STOCK # 5C702102 \$21,995⁰⁰*
Henis Nedlic Sales Consultant Visit or call 234-5562	2006 Honda Civic LX STOCK # 6L012086 \$15,995⁰⁰*	2005 Nissan 350Z STOCK # 5M654094 \$24,995⁰⁰*

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Joeten Motors
POWERED BY YOU

Coca-Cola names 2nd batch of promo winners

A lawyer, an accounting technician with the Workforce Investment Agency and a retiree were among the five second draw winners of Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia) Inc.'s "Golden Ticket Giveaway" promo, and all have one thing in common: They say Coke is their soda of choice.

"Oh yes, I always buy Coke," said attorney Robert "Bob" H. Myers Jr. "I drink a lot of Coke," he added. Myers, who has three children, said he will take them to the movies with the five Hollywood Theater passes he won. "I am thankful to Coca-Cola. It's a nice surprise, especially in these trying times," Myers said.

Another winner, Glenda Tabin, an accounting technician with WIA and a Dandan resident, said she was not expecting to win. She said she bought Coca-Cola products by the case for her daughter's 6th birthday on July 8. "I always buy Coke," she said, adding that she will treat her kids to the movies with the five tickets she won. Tabin said she was thankful that CCBM came up with the promo.

Yet another winner was Lucy Tenorio, a government retiree who lives in Papago and works part-time at One Call Maintenance. Tenorio said she entered just one coupon. "I always shop [at this store] and always buy Coke there," she said, adding that she'll give all five movie passes to her 15-year-old daughter and her friends. "I am thankful to Coke for this promo," Tenorio said.

Winners of the second raffle

NMC CREEES offering 18 paid summer internships

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service will offer 18 paid internship positions in its agriculture and family consumer science divisions.

The internships, which will last from Aug. 4 to Aug. 29, 2008, will provide students with excellent work experience and hands-on training through the interns' active involvement in different projects. There are eight research lab assistant positions and ten extension assistant positions available.

The internships are open to incoming high school juniors and seniors for school year 2008-2009. Interested applicants must submit a two-page application form, have an interest in the fields of agriculture and family consumer science and a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

Application forms can be picked up from the CREEES Office at the NMC As Terlaje Campus in Building F, or from the Tinian and Rota NMC Offices. For more information, please call the CREEES Office at 234-5498 Ext 1705. (CREEES)

draw still have a chance to win in the third and final draw scheduled for July 31, 2008. All three said they'll keep buying more Coke products for a chance to win again.

The other second-draw winners were Ed Villagomez and

Jinkie Alaza.

The winners received their prizes on July 18, 2008, at the Coca-Cola office in Chalan Laulau where the drawing was held on July 12, 2008.

The third and final winners will be drawn July 31, 2008.

Lawyer Robert "Bobby" H. Myers Jr. and Lucy Tenorio, a government retiree, hold the five Hollywood Theater movie passes that each of them won in the second draw of Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia) Inc.'s "Golden Ticket Giveaway."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Five winners are chosen during each drawing; and each winner gets five Hollywood Theater movie passes.

To enter, just purchase a 6-can pack or a 1.25-liter bottle of any Coca-Cola product to get one entry form. (PR)



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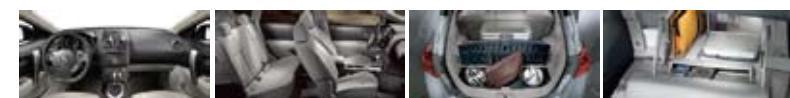
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FORD	STOCK #	COLOR	PRICE	HONDA	STOCK #	COLOR	PRICE
Ranger	#7PA8111	SOLD	\$16,000.00	Fit	#7S031086	Silver	\$14,995.00
Fusion	#7R114053	White	\$19,990.00	Fit Sport	#7S03110	SOLD	\$16,495.00
Escape	#7KB29539	White	\$19,990.00	Civic DX	#7L061948	White	\$16,995.00
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Flame Tree TV to feature Korean channel in lineup

Flame Tree TV, parent company of local channel KSPN2 and Visitor's Channel 3, will launch a second Visitor's Channel in Korean on Friday, Aug. 1.

Visitor's Channel 2 will run alongside the traditional Visitor's Channel 3, which will remain focused on the Japanese market, in more than 4,000 hotel rooms in the CNMI.

"We are excited to offer a new level of service to the growing Korean tourist market and the

companies that service them," said Flame Tree TV president Chris Nelson.

Nearly 165,000 Koreans are expected to visit Saipan, Tinian and Rota in the coming year. Visitor's Channel 2 will include information about where to go, what to see, and what to do. The channel will also have cultural, shopping and safety information, with the eventual addition of news and weather programs for Korean tourists. Local anchor

Janet Ahn will host the new program, and with a full on-site production studio and Korean staff, Flame Tree TV's Korean Visitor's Channel promises to be up to date with the latest news and information on local restaurants, hotels and attractions.

Korean Visitor's Channel 2 will air 18.5 hours daily on Channel 2. Between the hours of 6pm and 10:30pm local prime-time programming, anchored by the KSPN 2 News, will air.

Flame Tree TV and Production Company manages and operates the local channel KSPN2, The Visitor's Channel 2 and The Visitors Channel 3. (PR)

NEWS BRIEFS

Petition signing for marine monument

Friends of the Marianas Trench Marine Monument will be at the Sabalu Market starting at 9am and at Price Costco starting at 10am Saturday, July 26, to provide information on the proposed Marianas Trench monument, and to collect signatures in its support. Be informed! People are encouraged to come, ask questions, sign the petition! (PR)

Live fire training on FDM

The U.S. military will be conducting live fire training on the northern island of Farallon de Mendenilla from July 28 through Aug. 1, between 9am and 7pm.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, the Emergency Management Office advises the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to avoid the Farallon de Mendenilla Training Area on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Any questions should be directed to the EMO Operations Section at 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16 and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. (EMO)

Tinian Peace Ceremony to mark 6th year

Preparations are now underway for the 6th annual Tinian Nagasaki Hiroshima Peace Ceremony that will be held

Aug. 6, the anniversary of the 1945 American atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan by the *Enola Gay*, which took off from the island of Tinian.

Scheduled events for the ceremony include a Sounding of the Sirens at 9:15am at the Children's Peace Monument that will coincide with the moment of silence at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony in Japan (9:15 am is the local time the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima). A special multi-faith prayer for peace is also scheduled for the morning portion of the peace ceremony. An evening candlelight vigil featuring performances of peace songs and poetry by community members will be held at 7pm on the night of the ceremony. (PR)

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Semi-Fulltime	\$235	\$125	
Fulltime	\$280	\$150	
K3 Monthly			
Part-time	\$215	\$125	
Semi-Fulltime	\$255	\$150	
Fulltime	\$300	\$175	
K4 Monthly			
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Semi-Fulltime	\$255	\$175	
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CREES gets \$72K grant to try new pest control agent

In an effort to curb the adverse effects of pests on local crops, the Northern Marianas College—Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service has secured a \$72,000 grant to fund a project that will demonstrate a new botanical insect control agent in the CNMI.

The Demonstration of Botanical Pesticides project, whose grant request was authored by CREES Pesticide Safety and Education Program Coordinator Arnold Route, will be funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service.

It aims to introduce Neem (also known as Nim, Nima, or its scientific name Azadirachta indica) to combat pests and minimize their harm.

Neem is a fast growing, non-invasive tree. Leaves for insecticide production can be harvested already three months after a seedling has been planted. Neem also improves soil quality, reduces wind erosion, and helps in greening of wastelands. Its most important feature, however, is that it offers a safe, effective, and economic strategy for pest control in harmony with nature and within reach of farmers with limited resources. The plant is said to control more than 125 pest species with little to no harm to beneficial insects.

Trials will start in October this year when the first seedlings will be planted on NMC-CREES experiment station in As Perdido. Farmers who are interested in participating in the Neem experiment can do so by contacting the CREES Office. According to Route, there will be 500 or more seedlings available for island-wide propagation.

"The advantage of Neem is that farmers can produce the leaf extract themselves," Route said. "All they need is a blender."

The timeline of this project is split into two phases. Phase one will start in October 2008 and consists of propagation and monitoring with crop trials in March next year. In the second phase from June 2009 to August 2010, NMC-CREES will concentrate on community outreach through the use and dissemination of brochures, video presentations, and workshops.

The benefits of botanical pest control are multifaceted. Neem extract presents no danger to CNMI's aquifers. Residues on fruits, fodder crops and vegetables are not harmful to humans or animals.

"This project is part of CREES's efforts to diminish the CNMI's use of insect control chemicals that have harmful environmental and health consequences," said Felicitas "Tee" Abraham, Dean for Community



Programs & Services

Arnold Route holds a B.S. in Agriculture from the University of Guam. He possesses years of experience at the University of Guam Experiment Station working on entomological issues. Route started his career with NMC-CREES in 1999 on Tinian and moved to the Entomology Lab on Saipan in 2003.

To learn more about this project the interested public can contact Route at NMC-CREES 234-5498 ext. 1432. (NMC-CREES)

Neem is a fast growing, non-invasive tree. Leaves for insecticide production can be harvested already three months after a seedling has been planted.

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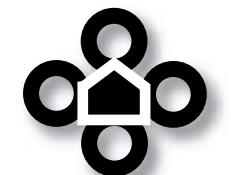
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Red Cross responds to multiple fires in July

The NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross has been extremely busy during the past two weeks. On July 7, a major fire started on the second floor of a building in Garapan that destroyed everything. There were 24 adults and children who lost all their belongings.

"Many left the building without even a shirt on their back," said Claudine Atalig, senior Red Cross caseworker.

The Chapter provided temporary housing, food, clothing and baby formula to many of the victims. Assistance also included providing one month's rent at a new place to live.

"It was difficult to see such total loss, especially when small children are involved," said JD Tenorio, Red Cross Emergency Services director.

On July 9, a huge fire completely destroyed the MGM Garment factory and adjacent barrack in Chalan Piao. A total of 239 individuals were affected by the fire and 88 lost everything as the fire quickly spread around the compound.

The Red Cross arrived on the scene as fire fighters tried to control the blaze. Drinks and food were provided to the first responders, as it took more than six hours to put out the fire.

"The Chapter's first obligation is to the fire victims, but we're also here to support our partners in response, which include firefighters, police, EMO and others," said Jerry Facey, Disaster Services Committee member.

Victims received shoes, clothes, bedding, hygiene kits, and storage containers.

On July 19, a fire swept through a home in Koblerville. The entire

house was destroyed along with a vehicle. "Fortunately no one was injured, but the loss of all ones personal belonging is devastating," said John Hirsh, executive director of the NMI Chapter. The Red Cross provided emergency shelter as well as other assistance, including clothing, bedding and food.

All Red Cross disaster relief is provided for free through the generous support of individuals and businesses in the CNMI. For more information about the Red Cross and its humanitarian work or how to donate or volunteer your time, contact the NMI Chapter at 234-3459 or visit www.nmi.redcross.org. (ARC)



A fire razes a home and a vehicle in Koblerville.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



The MGM Garment factory and adjacent barrack in Chalan Piao.



A major fire starts on the second floor of a building in Garapan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

State Board of Education PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PSS RFP# 08-020

The Public School System (PSS) and the State Board of Education are soliciting for request for proposals for an individual/vendor for the One (1) Year Janitorial Services for the **Marianas High School Gymnasium** for PSS. Detailed information on the Scope of Work are available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All Proposals and (Responsibility Determination-Confidential) documents must be in a sealed envelope face marked "RFP # 08-020 "One (1) Year Janitorial Services for the **Marianas High School Gymnasium**" and submitted & labeled one (1) original with three (3) copies to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than August 13, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Any bids after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Technical questions must be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, PSS Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer, at fax # (670) 664-3791 or e-mail to babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp. Questions must be in writing and submitted to AP&SO no later than Ten (10) working days prior to the deadline to submit the proposals.

The bidders are requested to submit with their proposal a copy of their valid CNMI Business License to conduct Janitorial Services (Supply & Services).

The selection of an individual or firm will be based on the following criteria: Qualification of Firm-30 Points, Performance Record-30 Points and Price-40 Points a total of 100 Points.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all proposals if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All proposals shall become the property of the Public School System.

Inquiries to this proposal announcement may be directed to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office at telephone number 237-3062 or 3077 or faxed to 664-3791.

/S/ Craig H. Garrison
Acting, Commissioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
PSS Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

State Board of Education PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PSS RFP# 08-023

The Public School System and the State Board of Education are soliciting for competitive sealed proposals for the **Hardening of the Rota High School Covered Walkway**, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Scope of Work and plans are available at the PSS Procurement and Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950. A charge of \$10.00 will be assessed for the plan. FEMA and the NMHC has obligated portion of the project cost.

This Procurement is made in accordance with the PSS Procurement Regulation (PSSPR) Section 3-106, entitled "Competitive Sealed Proposals."

All interested companies are required to attend the pre-proposal conference and site visit on July 30, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., local time at the Rota High School in Songsong Village, Rota.

All responses to this Request For Proposal must take into account all taxes that the CNMI Government will assess if the contract is awarded, including the CNMI Excise Tax. All proposals must be in a sealed envelope face marked "RFP# 08-023" containing the original plus five (5) copies, and be submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office Situated on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 2:00 p.m., local time on August 15, 2008. No Bid Proposal submissions will be accepted after the closing under any circumstances.

All vendors are requested to submit with their proposal a copy of their CNMI Business License and other responsibility documents in compliance with PSSPR 3-301. The selection of the contractor(s) will be based on the following criteria: **Qualification** (20 points); **Performance** (20 points); **Price** (20 points); **Time Table** (20 points) and **Warranty** (20 points) a total of 100 points.

In accordance with PSSPR Section 4-401, bid security of fifteen percent (15%) must accompany the proposal. This security may be certified check, cashier's check or a bid bond.

Inquiries to this proposal announcement may be directed to the PSS Acting Procurement & Supply Officer at telephone number 237-3062. Technical questions, however, must be in writing and must be addressed to W. David Loan, PSS CIP Coordinator. Questions can be either faxed to (670) 664-3715 or e-mailed to loan@pss.cnmi.mp.

The Public School System reserves the right to award a single or multiple awards, or to reject any or all bids if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System. All proposals shall become the property of the Public School System.

/S/ Craig H. Garrison
Acting, Commissioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
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Men playing *taulafoga*.Women playing *fiti*.

Traditional games live again at arts fest

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa—Curious crowds have gathered to see traditional games being played by members of the Senior Community Employment Program at the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts in American Samoa.

The program is carrying out research into traditional games and ways to revive them, says SCEP Division Manager, Valasi Lavata'i Gaisoa.

The game of *taulafoga*, which

was mainly played by *matai* (chiefs) in the past, involves seeing who can throw a *fine* (stone) the furthest. Coconut shells can be used instead of stones.

Accuracy and concentration are needed to succeed at another game, *fiti* (flick game), which requires flicking a single stick clear of a pile. *Fiti* is played by women.

Gaisoa says *taulafoga* and *fiti* are traditional Samoan

games that originated hundreds of years ago.

“*Taulafoga* was a game for the *matai* when they had social gatherings where they were not doing anything but were practicing the way they should speak,” she said.

Gaisoa said that playing the game helped inspire chiefs in the speaking skills they needed when addressing family or villagers.

To play the game, two teams sit at opposite ends of a flat, 60-foot long, raised playing surface. The surface is covered by a large mat on top of which a thin mat with a smooth surface is placed. Each team skims stones across the smooth mat to try and hit the other team's *fine* off the mat and gain points.

Gaisoa says *taulafoga* has changed over time. “The game has evolved because now women

are playing it, whereas before it was strictly for high chiefs.”

Fiti requires poise and accuracy, Gaisoa explains, and is usually very entertaining because players sing and dance as they play.

“It requires a lot of coordination and concentration. Women play it in their spare time—they dance to help themselves loosen up and come back to flick only when a stick is not obstructed by

other sticks and can be flicked clear of the rest.”

Gaisoa says elderly women continue to play these games today both for enjoyment and to revive and preserve an age-old art.

“Our senior citizens have helped to revive these games, which is what the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts is all about – bringing alive our culture and tradition.” (SPC)

Host country for 12th festival to be selected by Council of Pacific Arts



Children join in a dance by a group of Aboriginal dancers from Australia.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Country delegates at Monday's official festival opening ceremony.

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa—The Council of Pacific Arts, which oversees the promotion of culture in the Pacific, including preparations for the Festival of Pacific Arts, met yesterday morning at the 10th Festival in American Samoa to select the host country for the 12th festival in 2016.

The meeting was organized by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, which provides the secretariat for the council. (Solomon Islands will host the next festival in 2012.)

SPC's Human Development Programme Manager, Linda Petersen, says the festival is the region's most important cultural event with all SPC member countries coming together to

celebrate their customs and traditions. The event is also an important opportunity to consider the role that culture plays in shaping the future of the region and its people.

Speaking at the festival opening ceremony on Monday on behalf of SPC Director-General, Dr. Jimmie Rodgers, Petersen said cultural vitality is key to maintaining and enhancing quality of life. She said that, internationally, culture was increasingly recognized as an essential element of people's well-being.

Petersen also presented a carving to American Samoa Gov. Togiola T. Tulafono. The carving, which was specially commissioned for the festival,

symbolizes the festival theme, “Su’iga’ula a le Atuvasa” – threading the Oceania *ula*.

Meanwhile, the festival is in full swing. Wednesday saw the opening of the festival village just opposite Utulei beach and all day thousands of people, including delighted passengers off a cruise ship that dropped anchor for the day in Pago Pago, thronged to the village where each delegation has a *fare* displaying its art.

The Council of Pacific Arts comprises the twenty-two Pacific Island countries and territories that are members of SPC, with the addition of Hawaii, Easter Island and Norfolk Island, and the founding members, Australia and New Zealand. (SPC)

VISITORS

From Page 20

woven and how old they are, or how many hands they have passed through. When we present the fine mats we chant in our native tongue, praising the work that has been done and saying thank you for them.”

The tradition of “*fa’alelega*” is passed from one generation to the next.

Atuatasi says despite not having village societies to help preserve some of these practices, the island is lucky because the government has allocated funds to help preserve customs and traditions.

“Although there are certain things that change, the value of these mats remains. You can't avoid change. Some things are replaced with more modern things but the value behind why we continue these cus-

toms still remains. The important thing is to keep the value of our cultures intact.”

Work on the mats presented in Tuesday's opening ceremony began four years ago, just after the last Festival of Pacific Arts in Palau in 2004.

“Because so much time and effort is put into making these mats, there's a lot of value placed on them and we present them to our guests as a token of our appreciation.” (SPC)

Business

If asked about drug use, it's best to be honest

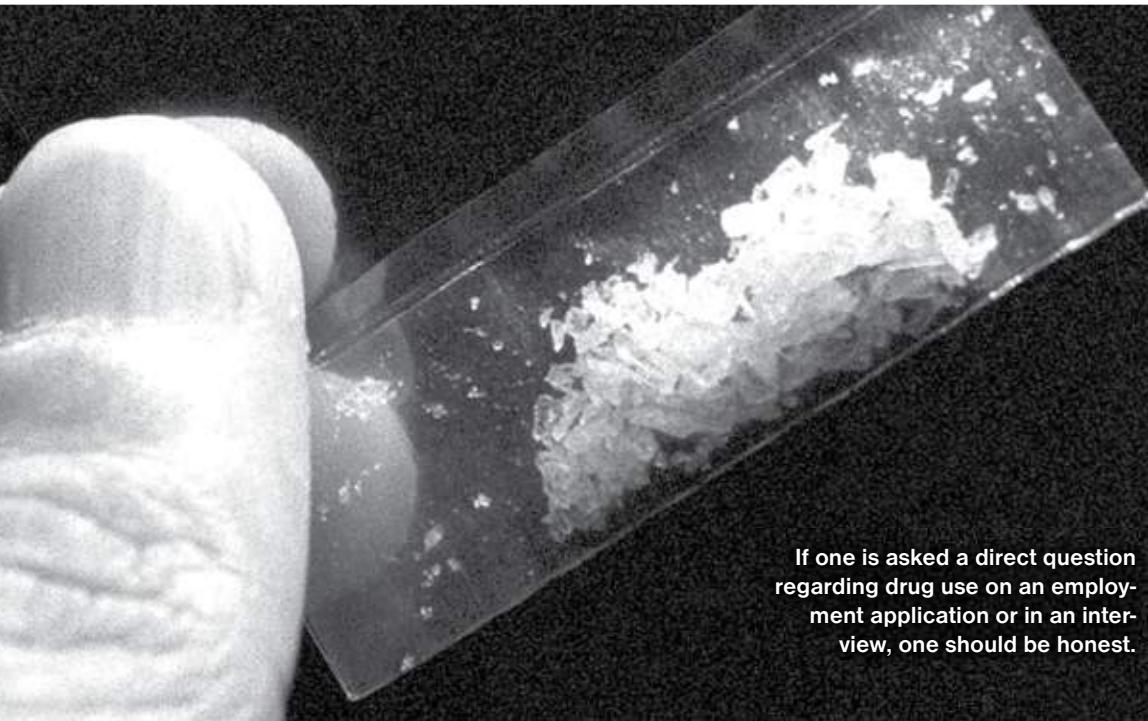
By LILY GARCIA
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

A reader writes:

"I know that most Americans claim to have a zero-tolerance policy regarding drugs. I'm sure a large number of people have never tried any kind of drug. I am not one of those people. In college, I heavily experimented with alcohol and marijuana. Later on, I also tried psychedelics, cocaine and prescription narcotics. My use after college was sporadic enough that I easily passed several pre-employment urine drug screens without altering the sample. In the past year, after much soul-searching with my husband, we decided we needed to quit completely. It's not easy, and two times this year we both smoked pot, and he did cocaine once...."

"My husband applied for a new job in which he knew he would be drug tested. He is absolutely perfect for the job and after five interviews was offered the job, contingent on passing a background check and a drug test. We bought several at-home urine tests and he tested clean on every one of them. When he showed up at the clinic for his drug test, they took a hair sample instead. ... I have read that the test is only supposed to measure the inch-and-a-half closest to the scalp and that sample would most likely test negative for drug use, but I don't feel secure that they won't test the entire sample. I have also read that the hair analysis can detect level of use, which would be in his favor unless they have a zero-tolerance policy."

"We haven't heard from the employer since the test (three days ago) and one of the clinics we called suggest-



If one is asked a direct question regarding drug use on an employment application or in an interview, one should be honest.

ed my husband call the company, be honest, and explain that he might not pass but that he is not a habitual user (or even a "weekend warrior"). It was my impression that most employers who drug test do so for insurance reasons but I didn't know if those insurance companies had zero-tolerance policies. I also read that the American with Disabilities Act prohibits employers from discriminating against recovering addicts, but is my husband considered a recovering addict if his use isn't even enough to get into a rehab program?"

The response:

I am not here to pass judgment on those who use recreational drugs. But I can amply confirm that job searching and work life is made more complicated, and in many ways more difficult, by recreational drug use. According to a 2001 report prepared by the Schneider Institute for Health Policy for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the annual cost of substance abuse to the U.S. economy exceeds \$414 billion. The same study

reports that approximately one in four U.S. deaths each year is attributable to the use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. On an individual level, drug abuse not only threatens your health, but leads to long-term impairments in professional, emotional and social functioning, and could most obviously lead to your arrest and conviction. I therefore applaud you and your husband for making the decision to lead a drug-free life.

Meanwhile, if he is asked a direct question regarding drug use on an employment application or in an interview, your husband should be honest. If he is not, and his drug use is detected in a routine test, his offer of employment will probably be rescinded on the basis of the false statements made in his application. However, I disagree with the advice you got from the clinic. I do not recommend that he volunteer information regarding his drug use unless asked. He has nothing to lose if the drug use is not detected. If the drug use is detected, then he can offer an explanation.

If it comes to that, the Americans with Disabilities

Act (ADA) might protect your husband from job discrimination based upon a history of drug addiction. Generally, the ADA protects people from discrimination when they have a current physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, when they have a record of such an impairment, or when they are regarded as having such an impairment (even if they do not actually have it).

Drug addiction is an impairment under the ADA, but the use of drugs without addiction is not an impairment. Individuals who are in recovery from drug addiction, who have a history of drug addiction or who are regarded as having such an impairment are protected by the ADA. However, people who are currently engaging in illegal drug use and people whose past substance abuse did not and does not limit a major life activity are not protected.

In your husband's case, whether he would enjoy the anti-discrimination protections of the ADA, therefore, would depend upon whether he can persuasively claim to

be in recovery from drug addiction, have a history of drug addiction, or be regarded by his prospective employer as either having a history of drug addiction or being in recovery. He would also need to show that his past abuse is or was sufficiently limiting to him in one or more major life activities, and that he is not currently using. The final outcome will largely be dictated by whether the drug test results indicate illegal drug use that is recent enough that the employer could reasonably believe that your husband is a current user rather than someone in recovery.

It is astute of you to note that the fact that your husband has been unable to get a treatment program to accept him will make it harder for him to argue that he is an addict in recovery. That might also make it hard for him to argue that the impact

of his past drug use was severe enough to qualify him for ADA protection. However, your husband's would-be employer might give him the benefit of the doubt if the drug use appears to be several months in the past. Also, the fact that his most recent use was relatively mild is actually a double-edged sword. It might exclude him from ADA protection, but it might also make the employer less hesitant about hiring him.

Regardless, it would both help your case and benefit your life if you and your husband could find the support that you need in your efforts to quit. If you have not done so already, you should explore Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. Such meetings have been recognized as recovery programs that would qualify a former addict for ADA protection. These groups are welcoming to people with substance abuse problems of all degrees of seriousness, and they enjoy widespread acceptance in the mental health community. In fact, many counseling programs often encourage participants to attend such meetings as a supplement to their work.

\$ DOLLARS AND SENSE

Save money by raising your credit score

By DAVID UFFINGTON

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With the growing number of foreclosures, repossessions and jobs being lost, lenders are taking a hard look at borrowers before lending money.

Lenders care about how likely you are to repay your debt on time, and your credit report gives them a good indication of how you've handled credit in the past.

The FICO score is the most commonly used credit-rating system, but each of the big three reporting agencies use the information in a different way, thus producing different credit scores on the same credit history. (A lender will likely take the middle of these three numbers.)

Here are some steps you can take to improve your credit score:

■ Pay your bills on time. This counts as 35 percent of your total score.

■ Limit the amount of your available credit that you use.

■ Limit the number of inquiries on your credit report. If you need to shop for deals, perhaps for a car loan, do your homework so that the credit inquiries are all done in a short period of time, say a month.

The credit bureau will consider all the inquiries in a given amount of time to be part of the same inquiry.

■ Don't automatically cancel old credit cards that you don't use. Longevity of your accounts counts for 15 percent of your FICO score. Cancelling the cards will often result in a lowering of your score.

■ The jury is out on whether credit counseling will hurt your credit score. It probably won't, but it might impact your ability to get a loan if part of the counseling was to negotiate smaller payments on old debt.

■ Track your credit score. If it goes down, follow up by getting a copy of your credit report to verify that all the information is correct.

A good credit score can make the difference between getting a loan with a low interest rate or getting one with a higher rate—or not at all.

For more information, go to www.privacyrights.org, then click on FAQ and Index and scroll down to Credit Scores: Fact Sheet 6(c): Your Credit Score: How It All Adds Up. The Federal Credit Information Center has good information as well. Check www.pueblo.gsa.gov and put "credit scores" in the search box.

Elusive federal interviews; beat the promotion blues

By MARY ELLEN SLAYTER
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Q: Do you have any thoughts on the federal job market? I received a number of offers for interviews last year, for almost every position I applied for. This year, I have yet to receive an offer to interview. Has the job market changed dramatically in this short amount of time? Has the poor economy flooded the federal job market?

A: Federal hiring appears to be as strong as last year, but I

think you are right, the competition for those jobs has become much more fierce. The federal government's package of pay and benefits, along with the relative job security, has become more attractive to many workers in the private and nonprofit sectors.

■ ■ ■

Q: I was turned down for a promotion at work, and I'm having trouble refocusing. My manager said that I did great on the interview and that it was a close race. They felt confident that I could do the job, but I was not selected

A: You and your boss need to

develop ways together for you to acquire supervisory experience. It's hard to say exactly what that means without knowing your industry. In general, though, it would mean taking a leadership role on smaller projects, under your boss's guidance. Your boss would gradually step back, until you were running the show on your own.

You should also ask if your company offers any leadership training seminars. Many do.

Questions from *Career Tracks*, an online discussion about workplace issues.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA 5,191.700 Up 30.100 (+0.58%)	HONG KONG 2,869.837 Up 31.988 (+1.13%)
JAKARTA 2,227.9221 Up 2.0781 (+0.09%)	TOKYO 13,367.33 Up 182.37 (+1.38%)
K. LUMPUR 1,139.41 Up 2.69 (+0.55%)	MANILA 2,535.91 Up 72.97 (+2.96%)
SINGAPORE 2,955.88 Up 65.22 (+2.26%)	SEOUL 1,624.92 Up 33.16 (+2.08%)
BANGKOK 694.36 Up 0.22 (+0.03%)	

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW 11,632.38 +29.88	NASDAQ 2,325.88 +21.92
S&P 1,282.19 0.00	

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar 1.0435	British Pound 0.5005
Canadian Dollar 1.0098	
Chinese Renmbi 6.8282	
Euro 0.6371	
Hong Kong Dollar 7.8007	
Indian Rupee 41.9117	
Indonesian Rupiah 9131.5	
Japanese Yen 107.82	
Malaysian Ringgit 3.2427	
New Zealand Dollar 1.3471	
Philippine Peso 43.97	
Singapore Dollar 1.362	
South Korean Won 1008.75	
Swiss Franc 1.038	
Taiwan Dollar 30.41	
Thailand Baht 33.45	

In U.S. dollar terms

Oil drops below \$125, 1st time since June

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil prices shed nearly \$4 Wednesday, tumbling below \$125 a barrel for the first time since early June on growing fears that high prices and the weak economy are destroying demand.

Light, sweet crude for Sep-

tember delivery dropped \$3.98 to settle at \$124.44 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, crude's lowest finish since June 4. The August contract expired Tuesday at \$127.95.

At the gas pump, prices continued to let up. Regular gasoline dropped more than a penny to an average of \$4.0402 a gallon nationwide, according to auto club AAA, the Oil Price Information Service and Wright Express. That is down more than 7 cents from last Thursday's all-time high. Diesel slipped

0.6 cent to \$4.802.

A weekly report by the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration offered further evidence that cash-strapped Americans are cutting back on fuel. Demand for gasoline over the four weeks ended July 18 was 2.4 percent lower than a year earlier, averaging more than 9.3 million barrels a day.

The drop in gas demand was echoed in a report from the Federal Reserve on regional economic conditions that showed the country mired in sluggish economic

growth and rising prices.

The Energy Department also report showed that gasoline stockpiles jumped by 2.9 million barrels last week, far more than analysts surveyed by energy research firm Platts predicted. The decline in crude inventories was less than forecast.

None of those figures gave traders—who until recently seemed more focused on supply threats than shrinking demand—reason to begin buying again.

"The market appears heavily concentrated on demand num-

bers all of a sudden," said Jim Ritterbusch, president of energy consultancy Ritterbusch and Associates. "These numbers continue to show big-time depreciation in gasoline demand."

Concerns that Hurricane Dolly might affect U.S. oil and natural gas output in the Gulf of Mexico dwindled as it made landfall near South Padre Island in Texas. The Minerals Management Service reported that only about 4.7 percent of production - about 60,000 barrels a day - has been halted because of the storm.

Minimum wage going up, little help as costs soar

WASHINGTON (AP)—About 2 million Americans get a raise Thursday as the federal minimum wage rises 70 cents. The bad news: Higher gas and food prices are swallowing it up, and some small businesses will pass the cost of the wage hike to consumers.

The increase, from \$5.85 to \$6.55 per hour, is the second of three annual increases required by a 2007 law. Next year's boost will bring the federal minimum to \$7.25 an hour.

Workers like Walter Jasper, who earns minimum wage at a car wash in Nashville, Tenn., are happy to take the raise, but will still struggle with the higher gas and food prices hammering Americans. "It will help out a little," said Jasper, who with his fiancee support a family of seven, and who earns the minimum plus commissions when customers order premium car-wash services.

The bus fare he pays each day to get to work already went up to \$4.80 this spring from \$4. "I'd like to be on a job where I can at least get a car," he said.

Last week, the Labor Department reported the fastest inflation since 1991 - 5 percent for

June compared with a year earlier. Energy costs soared nearly 25 percent. The price of food rose more than 5 percent.

So the minimum wage hike is "a drop in the bucket compared to the increases in costs, declining labor market, and declining household wealth that consumers have experienced in the past year," Lehman Brothers economist Zach Pandl said.

The new minimum is less than the inflation-adjusted 1997 level of \$7.02, and far below the inflation-adjusted level of \$10.06 from 40 years ago, according to a Labor Department inflation calculator.

Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia have laws making the minimum wage higher than the new federal requirement, a group covering 60 percent of U.S. workers, according to the Economic Policy Institute, a think tank.

"You get desperate, because you can't really pay for everything," said Gladys Lopez, 51, a garment worker from Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, who makes military uniforms and has earned the federal minimum for 18 years.



Minimum wage worker Enrique Blanco, paints a office building exterior in Los Angeles on Wednesday, July 23, 2008.

House OKs rescue for homeowners, Freddie, Fannie

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Rescue legislation sailed through the House on Wednesday aimed at helping 400,000 strapped homeowners avoid foreclosure and preventing the collapse of troubled mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The 272-152 vote reflected a congressional push to send election-year help to struggling borrowers and to reassure jittery financial markets about the

health of two pillars of the mortgage market.

Hours before the vote, President Bush dropped his opposition to the measure, which now is on track to pass the Senate and become law within days.

The White House swallowed its distaste for \$3.9 billion in grants for devastated neighborhoods. In return, the administration got both the power to throw Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac a

lifeline and the legislation Republicans long have advocated to rein in the government-sponsored mortgage companies.

Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson and lawmakers in both parties negotiated the final deal. It accomplishes several Democratic priorities, including aid for homeowners, a permanent affordable housing fund financed by the two mortgage companies and

the money for hard-hit neighborhoods. The grants are for buying and fixing up foreclosed properties.

"It is the product of a very significant set of compromises," said Rep. Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee. "We are dealing with the consequences of bad decisions and inaction and malfeasance from years before," said Frank, D-Mass.

Toyota outsells GM worldwide in first half

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors Corp., pummeled by falling U.S. sales and high gas prices, lost the global sales lead to Toyota Motor Corp. in the first half of this year, but the churning market makes it difficult to predict which automaker will end the year on top.

Toyota sold 4,817,941 vehicles globally during the first six months of the year, company

spokesman Hideaki Homma said Wednesday, beating GM by 277,532 vehicles. Toyota said its global sales rose 2 percent from the same period the year before, while GM's sales fell 3 percent.

It's the second time Toyota has beaten GM in sales in the first half of the year. In 2007, Toyota outsold GM by about 50,000 vehicles, although GM

eked out a win for the full year, retaining its 77-year position as the world's largest automaker by sales.

Toyota didn't release regional sales totals, but the weakened U.S. market appeared to be the biggest battleground. With its reputation for small, fuel-efficient cars and less exposure to the plummeting truck and SUV mar-

ket, Toyota's U.S. sales fell 6 percent, compared with a 16 percent drop for GM. Industrywide sales fell 10 percent.

"The U.S. is definitely the sore spot," said Erich Merkle, an auto analyst with Crowe Chizek and Co., a Grand Rapids accounting and consulting company. "Toyota is not doing well in SUVs and pickups either, but it's in a pretty good position in the small car and midsize sedan segments."

Nation

Dolly downgraded to tropical storm in south Texas

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (AP)—Hurricane Dolly barreled into South Texas on Wednesday, lashing the coast with winds up to 100 mph and dumping heavy rain that flooded some low-lying areas but spared levees along the heavily populated Rio Grande Valley.

Authorities had feared the first hurricane to hit the U.S. since last September could produce up to 20 inches of rain in some areas, possibly breaching levees in the heavily populated Rio Grande Valley. But shortly before its center came ashore, the Category 2 storm meandered 35 miles north of the border, veering away from the flood walls.

"We're not experiencing any issues with the levees right now," said Sally Spener, spokeswoman for the International Boundary and Water Commission. "The water is just not high enough. We are not experiencing flood conditions (on the Rio Grande)."

Dolly was downgraded to a tropical storm late Wednesday night, and authorities in Texas and Mexico were watching for flooding. About 5,000 people went to public shelters in three Texas counties hit hardest by the storm. More



A man pedals his bicycle down a flooded street in Brownsville, Texas as Hurricane Dolly hits the area on Wednesday, July 23, 2008. AP

were expected as night fell and at least 50,000 customers were left without power.

Most of the destruction from

wind was on the resort island of South Padre Island, where the hurricane's center came ashore and knocked out power to thou-

sands of homes, ripped off roofs and smashed windows.

Roads and yards were strewn with toppled trees, fences, power

poles and streetlights. Business signs rolled around the streets like tumbleweeds. The causeway linking the island to the mainland

McCain denies misstating timing of Iraq surge

BETHLEHEM, Pa. (AP)—Republican John McCain pushed back on Wednesday against Democratic criticism that he misstated when the troop buildup ordered by President Bush began, saying elements were put in place before Bush announced the strategy in early 2007.

He told reporters during an unscheduled stop in a supermarket that, what the Bush administration calls "the surge" was actually "made up of a number of components," some of which began before the president's order for more troops.

It's all a matter of semantics, he suggested.

McCain said Army Col. Sean MacFarland started carrying out elements of a new counterinsurgency strategy as early as December 2006.

Authorities seek indicted polygamist sect members

SAN ANGELO, Texas (AP)—Texas authorities on Wednesday began looking for five indicted members of a polygamist sect, in a child sex-abuse case that the group's spokesman alleged was a face-saving move by officials who lost a court battle over their seizure of hundreds of children from a sect-owned ranch.

The five men were indicted Tuesday with sect leader Warren Jeffs, who already was convicted in Utah and jailed in Arizona on charges related to under-age marriages.

Jeffs and four of the followers

At issue are McCain's comments in a Tuesday interview with CBS. The Arizona senator disputed Democrat Barack Obama's contention that a Sunni revolt against al-Qaida combined with the dispatch of thousands more U.S. combat troops to Iraq to produce the improved security situation there.

McCain called that a "false depiction." Democrats jumped on his comments. They said McCain's remarks showed he was out of touch, because the rebellion of U.S.-backed Sunni sheiks against al-Qaida terrorists in Iraq's Anbar province was under way well before Bush announced in January 2007 his de-

cision to send 30,000 additional U.S. troops to Iraq.

McCain asserted he knew that and didn't commit a gaffe. "A surge is really a counterinsurgency made up of a number of components. ... I'm not sure people understand that 'surge' is part of a counterinsurgency."

Speaking on CBS Tuesday of a Sunni sheik who approached Col. MacFarland, McCain said, "Because of the surge, we were able to go out and protect that sheik and others. And it began the Anbar awakening."

On Wednesday McCain continued to try to portray his opponent as naive on Iraq while the Illinois Democrat is visit-

ing the war zone, the Middle East and Europe.

"I am again deeply disappointed that Sen. Obama will not recognize that the surge has succeeded," McCain said. He said that "no rational person" could think otherwise.

McCain said he had been briefed by Col. MacFarland, commander of 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, in December 2006 to discuss the strategy that remains in force today. Bush announced the surge in January 2007 and the first of the new troops began operations in Iraq in early February 2007.

McCain made an unscheduled stop at "Kings Supermarket" in a shopping mall here, and greeted shoppers and commiserated with them on the soaring costs of both food and fuel.

Detective who helped arrest Oswald dead at 87

DALLAS (AP)—Dallas police Detective Paul Bentley, who helped arrest presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald at the Texas Theater, had a ready retort for those who didn't accept the official story that Oswald acted alone.

"What does conspiracy do?" Bentley would say. "It sells."

Bentley died Monday of natural causes in his home, said his grandson, David Ottinger. He was 87.

Bentley worked for the Dallas Police Department for 21 years, starting as a patrol officer and retiring as a detective five years after the assassination of President Kennedy.

He played a supporting role on Nov. 22, 1963, originally responding to Oswald's fatal

was closed for hours but was re-opened late Wednesday.

A 17-year-old boy fell from a seventh-story balcony, injuring his head, breaking his hip and fracturing his leg. The boy was being treated at an island fire station. It was not immediately known if the accident was directly caused by the storm.

Between 5 and 12 inches of rain had fallen in Brownsville's Cameron County by Wednesday evening and another 3 to 7 inches was expected during the night, according to the National Weather Service. Estimates in Laguna Vista and Bayview reached 12 inches.

Small communities just north of Brownsville were hit by high winds and flooded with murky waters, including low-lying colonias: small villages of immigrants who live without sewer and water service. A family of eight had to be rescued by sheriff's deputies when floodwaters surrounded their home.

No deaths were immediately reported in Mexico, but Tamaulipas state Gov. Eugenio Hernandez said 50 neighborhoods were still in danger from flooding. About 13,000 people had taken refuge in 21 shelters, he said.

shooting of Dallas police Officer J.D. Tippit. Bentley and other officers tracked Oswald to the Texas Theater, arresting him after a brief scuffle.

"The fight broke out on the main floor," said Gary Mack, curator of The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. "Bentley was up in the balcony. He raced down to help and piled on because Oswald punched an officer and pulled a gun."

In a well-known photograph taken just after the arrest, Bentley is wearing a suit with his hair slicked back and a cigar in his mouth, escorting Oswald out of the theater. Oswald appears to have a cut on his forehead, which Bentley said came from his Masonic ring. Ottinger said.

New policy lowers flags only for Ky. soldiers

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP)—Kentucky has started lowering flags to half-staff only for fallen soldiers from the Bluegrass State, upsetting veterans and lawmakers who say the policy dishonors tens of thousands of service members from other states stationed at installations such as Fort Campbell and Fort Knox.

Gov. Steve Beshear last month changed the old policy of lowering state and U.S. flags to half-staff from the announcement of any Kentucky-based

soldier's death until his or her funeral. Now the flag will be lowered only for Kentucky natives and even then only on the day they are buried.

Maj. Gen. Edward Tonini, Kentucky's adjutant general, said the previous policy made it impossible to tell who was being honored and led to lengthy stretches where flags were lowered for multiple people. Between April 1 and July 2, the state lowered flags for 26 soldiers, only four from Kentucky.

Farm labor contractor fined in worker's death



In this June 2, 2008 file photo, Josefina Flores, right, carries a photograph of Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez during a march to protest her death, near Thornton, Calif.



ACROSS THE NATION

Anti-gay Okla. lawmaker caught with gun at Capitol

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—A state lawmaker who gained national notoriety with an anti-homosexual rant was stopped from entering the state Capitol Wednesday when she was found to have a loaded handgun in her purse, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol said. Patrol spokeswoman Chris West said Republican Rep. Sally Kern was not charged because there did not appear to be any “malicious intent” behind her actions. West said officers are allowed to “use their brains” when determining if an arrest should be made in such instances. West also confirmed a second incident in which Kern made it into the building with a gun in June.

Feds charge shipping company in SF Bay oil spill

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The Hong Kong-based operator of a container ship that struck a bridge support in the San Francisco Bay last year has been indicted for allegedly doctoring paperwork in an attempt to thwart the investigation. A federal grand jury charged Fleet Management Ltd. on Tuesday with six felony counts of making false statements and obstructing justice. Prosecutors announced the indictment on Wednesday. Unidentified “senior ship officers and shore-based supervisory officials concealed and covered up documents with an intent to impede, obstruct and influence the investigation of the spill,” according to a Department of Justice summary of the indictment.

Judge to Moussaoui jury: You got it right

MCLEAN, Va. (AP)—The judge in the trial of convicted Sept. 11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui says she told jurors that they made the right decision in sparing his life. U.S. District Judge Leanne Brinkema also said in an April speech at Colby College that she was troubled by the government’s belated admission that it failed to turn over evidence that could have been key, a frustration she has expressed other times since the trial concluded in 2006. “One of the saddest realities I’ve had to face—in the Moussaoui case in particular—has been the reality that my government didn’t always tell me the truth,” Brinkema said. She declined Wednesday through her chambers to comment on the speech. An audio recording of her remarks has since been posted on the Internet.

Judge upholds convictions of ex-Newark mayor

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—A federal judge on Wednesday upheld the corruption convictions of former Newark Mayor Sharpe James and his one-time mistress, but indicated that James probably will get less than the 15- to 20-year prison sentence prosecutors are seeking. U.S. District Judge William J. Martini rejected bids by James and Tamika Riley to scrap the verdicts and order a new trial, finding that their jury had substantial evidence to determine that Riley was able to purchase city land at bargain prices while James was mayor. The convictions are to be appealed to a higher court.

Prosecutor: More people say LA doctor abused them

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A doctor charged with molesting eight patients was ordered held on \$4 million bail Wednesday as a prosecutor said accusations from seven more patients had surfaced. Police have interviewed three of the new accusers and four others have come forward in recent days, Deputy District Attorney Ann Marie Wise said in court. Wise said the high bail was requested because Dr. Kevin Antario Brown, 37, is considered a flight risk. His father is Bermuda Premier Ewart Brown. Superior Court Commissioner Henry Hall postponed Brown’s arraignment to Aug. 7. Brown was arrested July 8 and was initially charged with sexually molesting a female patient and a female undercover police officer who posed as a patient.

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—The employer of a pregnant teenager who died of heat stroke after pruning grapevines for more than nine hours in hot weather was hit Wednesday with the highest fine ever issued to a California farming operation.

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health fined Merced Farm Labor \$262,700 for violating eight workplace safety rules. The agency said some of the violations were intentional. A criminal investigation also is under way.

State authorities believe 17-year-old Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez died on May 14 because her supervisors denied

her access to shade and water as she pruned white wine grapevines for more than nine hours in nearly triple-digit heat at a Central Valley vineyard.

“There was virtually a complete absence of shade or water, two of the very few tools that employers and employees have to fight the heat,” said Len Welsh, chief of the division known as Cal-OSHA. “It’s just too bad we can’t undo the consequences of those violations.”

“I feel good because at least they’re being fined for not doing anything when all that happened,” said her fiance, 19-year-old Florentino Bautista, who is back working in the grape vines

for a different employer. “Now we’ll have to see if they keep acting the same way.”

Inspectors found that Merced Farm Labor not only failed to provide water but deliberately neglected to train workers and managers on how to stay safe while working in punishing temperatures. The company also willfully skirted preparing for a medical emergency, the agency said.

Those three violations are classified the most serious and each carries a \$70,000 penalty, the highest afforded under civil law.

The company has 15 business days to file an appeal, and

if it does so, the case could go before an administrative law judge who could reduce, accept or increase the fines, according to Dean Fryer, a Cal-OSHA spokesman.

San Joaquin County authorities say they have started a criminal investigation into Vasquez Jimenez’s death, but they won’t discuss the probe further while it’s ongoing.

Attorney James Gumberg, who represents Atwater-based Merced Farm Labor, did not return a call seeking comment Wednesday.

Labor Commissioner Angela Bradstreet is in the process of revoking the contractor’s license.



OIL SPILL

Workers place containment booms to contain fuel oil after a ship hit a oil barge spilling 9,000 barrels of fuel oil in the Mississippi River at the French Quarter area of New Orleans Wednesday, July 23, 2008.

Pittsburgh cancer center warns of cell phone risks

PITTSBURGH (AP)—The head of a prominent cancer research institute issued an unprecedented warning to his faculty and staff Wednesday: Limit cell phone use because of the possible risk of cancer.

The warning from Dr. Ronald B. Herberman, director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, is contrary to numerous studies that don’t find a link between cancer and cell phone use, and a public lack of worry by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Herberman is basing his alarm on early unpublished data. He says it takes too long

to get answers from science and he believes people should take action now—especially when it comes to children.

“Really at the heart of my concern is that we shouldn’t wait for a definitive study to come out, but err on the side of being safe rather than sorry later,” Herberman said.

No other major academic cancer research institutions have sounded such an alarm about cell phone use. But Herberman’s advice is sure to raise concern among many cell phone users and especially parents.

In the memo he sent to about 3,000 faculty and staff

Wednesday, he says children should use cell phones only for emergencies because their brains are still developing.

Adults should keep the phone away from the head and use the speakerphone or a wireless headset, he says. He even warns against using cell phones in public places like a bus because it exposes others to the phone’s electromagnetic fields.

The issue that concerns some scientists - though nowhere near a consensus - is electromagnetic radiation, especially its possible effects on children. It is not a major topic in conferences of brain specialists.

Convicted killers in Texas, Miss., put to death

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP)—Texas executed a man Wednesday who was convicted of killing a woman and her child, while Mississippi put to death a man who took part in the fatal beating of another man.

Derrick Sonnier shook his head “no” when asked if he had any final statements. He was pronounced dead at 6:18 p.m.

CDT, eight minutes after the lethal dose was administered.

Sonnier was convicted of murdering Melody Flowers, 27, and her 2-year-old son, Patrick, in their Houston apartment in 1991. Flowers was raped, stabbed, strangled and beaten with a hammer until its handle broke. Her son was stabbed eight times. Her body was dumped into a bathtub

Calif. woman mauled by bear recovers after surgery

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A woman mauled by a bear in a rural area of Southern California was recovering Wednesday as game wardens sought to trap and kill the animal.

Allen Hansen, 56, was resting comfortably after undergoing extensive surgery to repair injuries suffered in Tuesday’s attack, said Roxanne Moster, a spokeswoman for the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center.

Despite suffering severe lacerations to her face and head, the woman managed not only to escape but to drive herself to a nearby fire station, Kern County fire spokesman Sean Collins said.

“For her to be attacked in that manner and drive to a fire station, she must have been running on pure adrenaline,” Collins said.

Asia

Strong earthquake hits Japan, dozens injured

TOKYO (AP)—A powerful earthquake struck off the northern Japanese coast early Thursday, injuring at least 91 people, triggering landslides and cutting power to thousands of people, officials said. Japan's Meteorological Agency said there was no danger of a tsunami from the tremor, which had a preliminary magnitude of 6.8. It struck

shortly after midnight about 65 miles underground and centered just off the coast of Iwate, 280 miles northeast of Tokyo.

The 91 people injured were mainly suffering from cuts and bruises from broken glasses and falling objects and none of the injuries was life threatening, said National Police Agency official on condition of anonymity.

citing department policy.

The earthquake caused strong shaking of up to 40 seconds in large parts of northern Japan, official said.

"Everything has fallen off the shelves, scattered all over the floor," grocery store owner Tomio Kudo told national broadcaster NHK from the town of Hirono, where the shaking was

most violent. "Even a big refrigerator has moved about 30 centimeters (1 foot)."

There were no immediate reports of any problems at the nearest nuclear power plant, which continued operations, according to local media reports.

But Japan's "bullet" super-express trains were suspended in some areas, according to operator East Japan Railway Co.

The earthquake also triggered landslides at several locations, the police agency official said.

Disaster Minister Shinya Izumi told reporters that the earthquake caused a blackout in wide areas in the region, leaving about 6,700 homes without electricity. Izumi said a team of officials from the ministry were assessing the extent of damage.

Police said some of the more serious injuries included: a woman in Hirono and another in nearby Aomori City who each broke a leg falling down stairs; another woman in Aomori City who broke her hip as she fled out a window; and a 66-year-old woman in Miyagi prefecture who broke her arm falling from a bed.



ASEAN MEETING

Group photograph shows from back row, left to right, Cambodia's foreign Minister Kao Kim Hourn, Parliamentary Secretary for Canada Deepak Obhrai, France's Foreign Minister Rama Yade, Indonesia's Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, Japan's Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura, Laos' Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, Malaysia's Foreign Minister Rais Yatim, Myanmar's Foreign Minister Nyan Win, New Zealand's Foreign Minister Winson Raymond Peters, Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister Samuel Abal, Philippines delegation leader Enrique Manalo, South Korea's Foreign Minister Yu Myung-Hwan, State Secretary of Mongolia Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Additional Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Masood Khalid and front row, left to right, North Korea's Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun, China's Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, Brunei's Foreign Minister Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Bangladesh Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Foreign Minister of Australia Stephen Smith, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Sahas Bunditkul, Singapore's Foreign Minister George Yeo, Vietnam's Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, East Timor Foreign Minister Zacarias Albano Da Costa, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan hold hands for a group photo at the 15th ASEAN Regional Forum Retreat meetings on Thursday July 24, 2008 at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

Pakistan warns of new nuclear arms race with India

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—Pakistan has warned a deal leading to increased Indian access to nuclear fuel could accelerate the atomic arms race between the rivals, according to a letter obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

The letter was given to the AP a day after India's government won a confidence vote that paved the way for a landmark deal on nuclear energy cooperation with the United States. To finalize the U.S. deal, India must strike

separate agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency as well as the Nuclear Suppliers Group of countries that export nuclear material. Then Congress will need to approve the accord.

The agreements would end

more than three decades of nuclear isolation for India, opening its civilian reactors to international inspections in exchange for the nuclear fuel and technology it has been denied because of its refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and its testing of atomic weapons.

India imports about 75 percent of its oil, and the prime minister has argued the country needs the nuclear deal to power its financial growth and lift hundreds of millions out of poverty.

confidence vote that paves the way for the agreement to move forward. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was forced to call the confidence vote after communist political parties withdrew their support for his government this month to protest the agreement, fearing it would draw India closer to the U.S. On Wednesday, several key Indian political parties, including the communists, said they were forming an alliance to oppose the government.

Storm delays rescue of Himalayan climbers

ROME (AP)—Organizers of a Himalayan climb say bad weather has delayed a helicopter rescue for two Italians descending a mountain in Pakistan following the death of a fellow climber. Fog and rain have prevented Walter Nones and Simon Kehrer from making any progress Wednesday coming down Pakistan's Nanga Parbat mountain. The two are

stuck at about 21,600 feet on the 26,810-foot mountain. They must descend to 19,600 feet because thin air makes it too risky for helicopters to fly above that height. Organizers say a rescue attempt is now scheduled for Thursday, when the weather is expected to improve.

Relocation for China's Three Gorges Dam finished

BEIJING (AP)—Residents in the last township to be moved to make way for the rising waters of the Three Gorges Dam reservoir have been relocated, a state news agency reported Wednesday. The emptying of Gaoyang town of Hubei province, part of a larger relocation plan, began in August 2004 and was completed Tuesday, Xinhua News Agency reported. The government has moved nearly 1,000 households in the area in preparation for the rising water. More than 1.4 million people have been relocated to allow for the water to rise be-

hind the massive dam, the largest hydroelectric project in the world. The dam, which has a 410-mile long reservoir, is supposed to end flooding along the Yangtze River and provide clean energy alternative to coal.

Beijing Olympics broadcasting center evacuated

BEIJING (AP)—Hundreds were evacuated Wednesday from the massive building that will house broadcasting facilities for the Beijing Olympics, fearing there was a gas leak after people smelled a strong odor. But authorities later said it was a false alarm and the smell came from paint fumes in the ventilation system. Authorities told workers it was safe to go back in and there were no reports of injuries. Firefighters went in along with at least one emergency worker dressed head-to-toe in an orange hazardous materials suit to investigate the odor, which was initially mistaken for a gas leak.

UN to take up Thai-Cambodian border dispute

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—With some 4,000 troops massed along the Thai-Cambodian border, United Nations Security Council members say they will try to keep a standoff from escalating into war.

Diplomats said Wednesday they expect to call a special council session, probably next week, to deal with the latest dispute over land near the ancient temple of Preah Vihear. Cambodia has appealed to the U.N. Security Council to intervene, warning that the two sides were at "an imminent state of war."

The conflict is over an area less than two square miles around the temple that both nations claim as their own. The International Court of Justice awarded the temple to Cambodia in 1962, but its listing this month as a U.N. World Heritage Site has stirred tensions anew.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Bus blast in the Philippines kills at least 3

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine authorities say a bomb has exploded on a bus in the country's south, killing at least three people. Regional military spokesman Maj. Armand Rico says the explosion hit the bus parked at a terminal in Digos city. He says at least three people died in Thursday's blast, and some have been wounded, but details are sketchy. Officials have said they foiled a terrorist bomb attack in nearby Davao city this week when they intercepted a motorcycle rigged with explosives. Apart from Muslim militants, communist rebels and extortion gangs also operate in the area.

Mongolian lawmakers walk out of session

ULAN BATOR, Mongolia (AP)—Opposition lawmakers walked out of a Mongolian parliamentary session Wednesday

before they were to be sworn in, saying they refused to participate because last month's election was fraudulent. Accusations that the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party rigged the June 29 poll led to rioting in the capital of the fledgling democracy that left five dead, 300 injured, and hundreds detained. The violence prompted President Nambaryn Enkhbayar to declare the country's first-ever state of emergency. Sixty-six newly elected lawmakers were to be sworn in during the ceremony, but 25 Democrats walked out after the session opened.

US wants quick approval of India nuclear pact

NEW DELHI (AP)—The U.S. ambassador to India said Wednesday he hoped a landmark deal on nuclear energy cooperation with the United States could be sent to Congress for approval in September, one day after India's government won a

World

'Al-Qaida is leaving Iraq for Afghanistan'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Al-Qaida's foreign fighters who have for years bedeviled Iraq are increasingly going to Afghanistan to fight instead, the Iraqi ambassador to the United States said Wednesday.

"We have heard reports recently that many of the foreign fighters that were in Iraq have left, either back to their homeland or going to fight in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is now seeming to be more suitable for al-Qaida fighters," said Ambassador Samir Sumaida'ie.

Al-Qaida had training camps and a headquarters in Afghanistan, under the protection of the then-ruling Taliban, until the U.S. invaded after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. With al-Qaida forced out of Afghanistan, the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 quickly drew outside fighters there.

Sumaida'ie said al-Qaida is funding it now increasingly difficult to operate in Iraq, beginning with the rebellion of the largely Sunni tribes in Anbar Province in 2006 and 2007. Until then,



Afghan police officers are seen around the damaged police vehicle after it was hit by a roadside bomb in Chaparhar district of Nangarhar province east of Kabul, Afghanistan on Wednesday, July 23, 2008.

al-Qaida had ruled by intimidation and violence, establishing physical control and setting up a shadow government in large swaths of Iraqi territory.

"There were large tracts that

were run by al-Qaida, administered by al-Qaida - they had ministers, administrators, paid salaries and so on. This no longer exists, so they do not have any territory to control (where it)

is safe for them to move in and around Iraq," he said. "In whole areas they ceased to operate as effective terrorist networks."

Sumaida'ie's comments echoed those of the top U.S.

Obama tells Israel he is committed to its security

SDEROT, Israel (AP)—From the solemnity of a Holocaust museum to a dusty village battered by Hamas rockets, Democratic presidential contender Barack Obama on Wednesday professed "an unshakable commitment to the security" of Israel, whether the threat comes from terrorists, Iran or elsewhere.

"The way you know where somebody's going is where have they been. And I've been with Israel for many, many years now," he said on a day that bore striking similarities to campaigning in the United States.

In his public remarks, Obama sidestepped a question of whether he would condone an Israeli attack to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. But he said he was confident that in several private meetings he had not left Israeli politicians with the impression that, if elected president, he would be "pressuring them to accept any kinds of concessions that would put their security at stake."

Obama packed more than a half-dozen meetings, a stop at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, a helicopter tour of the country and a visit to a house hit by Hamas rockets into his only full day in Israel during his trip to the Middle East and Europe.

He also rode past an Israeli checkpoint into Ramallah on the West Bank, where he assured Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of his support for a two-state resolution of the region's long animosities. Later, entering a session with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Obama said his talks with

Abbas indicated "there's a strong sense of progress being made" toward peace. Olmert nodded and said, "Indeed."

Before dawn Thursday in Jerusalem, paid a predawn visit to the holiest place in Judaism, bowing his head in prayer at the Western Wall and pushing a small note into a crevice in the ancient wall, a custom that is observed by many.

Obama's major focus was clearly reassuring Israelis - and by extension millions of Jewish voters in the United States - of his commitment to the survival of the Jewish state. He leads his Republican rival, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, among Jewish voters, but his support falls short of what Democrat John Kerry drew four years ago.

Obama said Israelis could be certain of his commitment to Israel's security by looking at "my deeds."

"Just this past week, we passed out of the U.S. Senate Banking Committee, which is my committee, a bill to call for divestment from Iran, as a way of ratcheting up the pressure to ensure that they don't obtain a nuclear weapon," he said.

However, Obama does not serve on the banking committee, and McCain's campaign seized on the mistake.

"Not only is it not his committee, but he's not even on the committee, he didn't vote on the bill, and he had nothing to do with its passage," McCain spokesman Tucker Bounds said in a statement issued Wednesday.

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's presidential council on Wednesday rejected a draft provincial elections law and sent it back to parliament for reworking - a major blow to U.S. hopes that the vote can be held this year.

The decision was likely to delay the elections until next year because there would not be sufficient time to make the necessary preparations. U.S. officials have pushed hard for the polls, which had been due by Oct. 1, as a key step toward repairing Iraq's sectarian divisions.

The announcement followed stinging criticism by President

Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, over the methods used to pass the law despite a Kurdish walkout to protest a secret ballot on a section dealing with the disputed city of Kirkuk.

Talabani accused lawmakers of using unconstitutional means to push the legislation through "against the will of the second-largest parliamentary bloc," warning it could jeopardize national unity and provoke sectarian tensions.

The Kurds hold 58 seats in the 275-member parliament and traditionally ally themselves with majority Shiites.

Castro cryptic on Russian bomber report

HAVANA (AP)—Ailing Fidel Castro said Wednesday that Cuba's president was right to adopt a "dignified silence" over a Moscow newspaper report that Russia may send nuclear bombers to the island, and said Cuba doesn't owe any explanation to Washington about the story.

In a brief, cryptic essay posted on a government Web site Wednesday night, the 81-year-old former president neither confirmed nor denied the Monday report in Izvestia newspaper.

Moscow is angry about U.S. plans for missile-defense sites in eastern Europe and Izvestia cited a "highly placed" military aviation source as saying, "While they are deploying the anti-missile systems in Poland and the Czech Republic, our long-range strategic aircraft already will be landing in Cuba." Izvestia said this apparently re-



This December 1997 file photo shows a Tupolev-160 bomber during a combat training flight near the Engels air force base in the Saratov region of Russia, about 700 km (450 miles) southeast of Moscow.

fers to long-range nuclear-capable bombers.

Izvestia points out that there would have to be a political decision on landing bombers in Cuba, and quoted the unnamed source as saying there have been such discussions.

In Washington, U.S. State

military commander in Iraq. Gen. David Petraeus told The Associated Press last week that al-Qaida appears to be reassessing its chances of success in Iraq.

"They're not going to abandon Iraq. They're not going to write it off. None of that," Petraeus said. "But what they certainly may do is start to provide some of those resources that would have come to Iraq to Pakistan, possibly Afghanistan.

"We do think they are considering what should be the main effort," he said.

A U.S. counterterrorism official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence reporting said foreign fighters are generally not leaving Iraq for Afghanistan, but new recruits to al-Qaida are being sent to Afghanistan and Pakistan instead of Iraq. The numbers in all countries are small, however. The vast majority of al-Qaida in Iraq are native born, and extremists in Afghanistan and Pakistan are overwhelmingly Pashtun.

fighters from the region.

Sumaida'ie's remarks come as Democratic presumptive nominee Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois is conducting an overseas trip which included stops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama toured two war zones with Sens. Jack Reed, D-R.I., and Chuck Hagel, R-Neb.

Last week they issued a written statement saying that Afghanistan and Pakistan's border area, where the Taliban is resurgent and Osama Bin Laden is believed to be hiding, should be the central front in the war against terrorism.

Monthly death tolls of U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan surpassed U.S. military deaths in Iraq in May and June, even though there are far fewer coalition troops in Afghanistan.

Both Sumaida'ie and Petraeus warned, however, that security progress made in Iraq is not irreversible and al-Qaida could reassert itself there.

"If things break down in Iraq, they are capable of coming back," Sumaida'ie said.

Sudan's president pays defiant visit to Darfur

NYALA, Sudan (AP)—Sudan's president made a defiant visit to Darfur just a week after being charged with genocide in the war-ravaged region, vowing not to be intimidated by the indictment and then breaking into a tribal dance on a parched field to the delight of cheering supporters.

Wearing a beige suit and sunglasses and carrying a silver-tipped cane, President Omar al-Bashir exuded confidence during his stops Wednesday. He sought to cast himself as a peacemaker during speeches across the troubled land where an international prosecutor accuses him of committing crimes against humanity.

The carefully orchestrated trip seemed designed to portray the president as being deeply concerned about the region's people as his government tries to persuade the U.N. Security Council to block the case against him. It was al-Bashir's first known visit to Darfur in more than three years, and he rarely allows Western journalists to accompany him anywhere.

For hours, state television broadcast pictures of thousands of people in brightly colored tunics screaming "God is great!" and waving banners reading "No! No! to the prosecutor!" and "We are with you, al-Bashir!" Some signs were in English.

Off the Wall

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

117 cats, raccoon, and rabbit found at Omaha home

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—Humane society workers have found 117 cats, a raccoon and a rabbit in a north Omaha house. The discovery came Wednesday after Council Bluffs, Iowa, police caught the 54-year-old woman who lives at the house reportedly stealing cat food. Officials say she smelled like cat urine. It isn't the first time the woman has been in trouble for having too many cats. At one time the humane society pulled more than 200 cats from her house. Many of the cats taken Wednesday were sick and the floor was covered in feces. Some of the cats were dead.

Man finds second long python in Maine in a week

LEWISTON, Maine (AP)—A man is having trouble sleeping since he found a python snake about 9 feet long under the engine of his pickup truck. Harley Burgess's shocking discovery Saturday is the second of its kind in less than a week in Maine. Last Wednesday, a Gorham woman found an 8-foot snake, also identified as a reticulated python, in the washing machine. In Wilton, Burgess says he's still shaking when he thinks of the python found under his truck. He's had nightmares about the snake getting his grandson, who was with him the day the python was discovered. Burgess has been searching for clues as to how the snake got loose in his truck.

NY man earning \$100K lived in company paint shed

ORANGEBURG, N.Y. (AP)—A New York state report says a maintenance man who earned \$100,000 last year working at a psychiatric center has been living for free in a paint shed on company grounds and even had his mail delivered there. A report issued Monday by the inspector general's office says the worker lived on the grounds of the Rockland Psychiatric Center in New York City's northern suburbs for three years. It says he stayed in a back room of the shed and had a couch, microwave and refrigerator. The center's executive director told inspectors he didn't know the worker was living in the shed. The worker is being charged \$2,500 for the time he lived there.

'Pantyhose Bandit' causes sheer annoyance in Mass.

MILFORD, Mass. (AP)—Dozens of pairs of pantyhose have been left near a Milford school bus stop - causing sheer annoyance in the neighborhood. The pantyhose —sometimes new, sometimes used—has been left on Camp Street for more than two years. They're almost always black and queen sized. Resident Laurie Warich told the Milford Daily News she picked up 43 pairs in one day. Police say they've done some investigating and talked to one suspect. But Chief Thomas O'Loughlin said the only crime is littering—and they don't have the resources to focus on the case. That's left some neighbors discussing doing their own amateur sting with video cameras and walkie talkies to catch the culprit, whom they've dubbed the "Pantyhose Bandit."

Pet rabbit credited with saving couple from fire

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—A pet rabbit is credited with saving a couple from a fire that swept through their home in the southern city of Melbourne. Metropolitan Fire Brigade commander Mick Swift said the husband returned home from a night shift early Thursday and heard the family pet, named "Rabbit," scratching at the couple's bedroom door half an hour after he had gone to bed. Swift said the husband, whose identity has not been released, discovered a fire in a back room and smoke spreading quickly through the house. He was able to escape the house with his wife unharmed. Swift said the rabbit saved the couple from injury.

Teacher lasts 20 hours on carnival ride, wins \$1K

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP)—A Minnesota high school teacher has lasted 20 hours on a carnival ride to win the Ride the Tide Challenge at the Mall of America. Jim Salava, 40, of Oakdale, was declared the winner at the Nickelodeon Universe theme park when his final opponent stepped down at 2:35 a.m. Tuesday. Salava was among 10 riders who boarded the Avatar Airbender at 6:30 a.m. Monday. The pool dwindled to three riders just three hours into the competition. The Avatar Airbender averages 43 mph and reaches heights of 70 feet. Other than bathroom and meal breaks, contestants remained on the ride at all times - even to sleep. The top prize includes a family cruise, \$1,000 spending cash and a lifetime pass to the theme park.

Couple claim mysterious noise plagues their house

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Bob and Leona Ehrfurth say the noise that's been plaguing them for two years sounds something like a rumbling motor, with a subtle vibration that won't quit. Then it stops—especially when they try to show city officials or acoustic experts what they're hearing.

It's enough to keep 76-year-old Leona from sleeping.

"It's like there's a semi parked right outside with the engine running, but when you look out, there isn't one," she said.

She and her husband, who is 75, have lived in the same house for 42 years. The problem only developed over the last two years.

Her husband can sleep through it but also finds it irritating.

"It doesn't matter if the windows are open or closed—you still hear it," he said. "It's worse in the winter."

When they leave, they don't hear the noise, he said, so they know it's not some health problem the two share.

City officials hired a company for \$1,000 worth of testing in the house this spring, but the tester came up with no noise and no significant vibration.

Alderman Andy Nicholson knows exactly what's bugging the Ehrfurths.

"Yeah, I've experienced it,"

Nicholson said. "It's like an engine thing, a low-frequency vibration. I think it would be an annoyance."

He had hoped the testing equipment could be used inside one of the factories in the area, but Municipal Judge Jerry Hanson wouldn't sign the inspection warrant because there was no reasonable suspicion of a violation.

The Ehrfurths' immediate neighbors haven't complained, although some people, like Nicholson, have said they heard the sound.

The couple said the noise started soon after St. Bernard's Parish across the street had the roofing, chimney and ductwork

on a wing of its school redone. However, when the parish staff turned off all of its equipment as a test, the noise continued.

The city's Protection & Welfare Committee planned to take up the matter Wednesday night, when it discusses a report from Predictive Technologies Inc., which did vibration testing at the home.

Leona Ehrfurth said she's had to go to the basement or try to sleep in the sunroom to escape the noise.

"I try to stay in bed, but I get such a bad headache, I can't take it," she said. "We could move, but why should we have to? We didn't cause it."



FISH PEDICURE

Tracy Roberts, 33, of Rockville, Md. has her toes nibbled on by a type of carp called garra rufa, or doctor fish, during a fish pedicure treatment at Yvonne Hair and Nails salon in Alexandria, Va. on Thursday July 17, 2008. AP

R.I. police say man had 0.491 blood alcohol level

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—State police say they arrested a man early Tuesday whose blood alcohol level was 0.491 percent—the highest ever recorded in Rhode Island for someone who wasn't dead.

Stanley Kobierowski was taken to a hospital, put in the detoxification unit and sedated, said Maj. Steven O'Donnell. He was arraigned Tuesday on charges of driving while intoxicated and resisting arrest, and he was released after promising to appear Friday at a court hearing.

"The person's lucky they sur-

vived," O'Donnell said. "There's no doubt he would have gotten killed or killed someone if he had continued on the route he was taking."

A phone listing for Kobierowski could not be found, and he did not have a lawyer in court Tuesday.

Kobierowski, 34, of North Providence, was arrested after he drove into a highway message board on Interstate 95 in Providence, O'Donnell said.

After police arrived, Kobierowski had trouble getting out of the car, then grabbed it and refused to move, forcing

troopers to carry him to the breakdown lane before taking him back to their barracks, O'Donnell said.

A breath test showed blood alcohol readings of 0.489 percent, followed by 0.491, O'Donnell said, the highest readings state officials could remember for someone who didn't end up dead.

The legal limit in Rhode Island is 0.08. A level of 0.30 is classified as stupor, 0.4 is comatose and 0.5 is considered fatal, according to the health department.

Bubble burst? Off-Broadway show's suds stolen

NEW YORK (AP)—The bubble might have burst for off-Broadway's "Gazillion Bubbles Show." Someone has stolen the show's specialized soapy bubble solution, which takes two months to make.

A show spokesman says 3.4 tons of bubble solution and 6,000 toys went missing in the

June 10 break-in at a Hoboken, N.J., warehouse.

The show has only six weeks worth of solution on hand to make the air-filled globes of soapy film.

The interactive show was created by renowned bubble artist Fan Yang. It features dazzling

light effects, lasers and lots of bubbles - some so intricate or big they have smoke, other bubbles or even people inside them.

Yang has put up to four children in one bubble.

Yang and his wife, Ana Yang, also have a bubble show in Las Vegas.

Stolen motorcycle found after 34 years in N.J.

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—Prosecutors say a Harley-Davidson motorcycle that was stolen nearly 34 years ago in Rhode Island has surfaced in central New Jersey. The 1971 Sportster was purchased on eBay for \$2,400 by Michael Meistrell of Cranford.

The Union County prosecutor's office says he learned it was stolen on Halloween 1974 in Providence, R.I., after he contacted Harley-Davidson for more information about the vehicle.

Prosecutor Theodore Romankow says Meistrell and several other prior owners never realized the motorcycle had been stolen, including the Voorhees man who was the recent seller.

Ebay will reimburse Meistrell under its policy protecting those who inadvertently buy stolen vehicles.

The original owner is being traced and no arrests have yet been made.

Science & Technology

Scientist plies Asia seeking freshwater stingray

By MICHAEL CASEY
AP ENVIRONMENTAL WRITER

SAMUT SONGKRAM, Thailand

(AP)—Rushing across a temple parking lot, British angler Rick Humphreys yells, "We've got a fish."

He jumps into a small motorboat on the Maeklong River in time to see Wirat Moungnum bring the prize to the surface - a rare, giant freshwater stingray that weighs as much as 44 pounds.

It bursts through the murky water exposing a soft, white underbelly the size of a trash can lid. The crew scrambles to string a rope through its gill-like slits and wrap a towel around its 5-foot-long tail that has a venomous barb.

"It's a start," Humphreys says almost apologetically. The specimen is a tenth of the size of the largest rays. "There are a lot bigger ones than that."

Humphreys is serving as a guide for American biologist Zeb Hogan, who is on a worldwide quest for the largest freshwater fish.

Hogan, 34, has heard the stories of Cambodian fishermen catching rays that weighed over 1,100 pounds with wingspans of 14 feet. But so far, they are just stories. If he can confirm them, he could eclipse the world record now held by the Mekong giant catfish.

"It could be the largest fish in the world and we know next to nothing about it," Hogan says. "I've spent five years on the Mekong looking for rays and only saw two or three. They were nowhere near the size I'd heard about."

Hogan's quest is part of the Megafishes project financed by the National Geographic Society.

The three-year project, which started in 2006, aims to document and protect freshwater giants that weigh at least 200 pounds or measure 6 feet long. The project will take Hogan to 14 freshwater systems on six continents, including the Mekong, Nile, Mississippi and Amazon rivers.

Time is running out for many of the species. The Chinese paddle fish and the dog-eating catfish in Southeast Asia are on the brink of extinction because of pollution, overfishing and dam building. In the Yangtze, where the Three Gorges Dam is a serious threat, Chinese paddle fish haven't been caught since 2003.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Many banks are unwittingly training their online customers to take risks with their passwords and other sensitive account information, leaving them more vulnerable to fraud, new research shows.

The result is that even the most security-conscious Web surfers could find themselves the victims of identity theft because they've been conditioned to ignore potential clues about whether the banking site they're visiting is real—or a bogus site served up by hackers.

That's the conclusion by University of Michigan researchers who found design flaws in 76 percent of the 214 U.S. financial institution Web sites they studied.

The study, to be presented Friday

"Of the two dozen or so species of giant fish, about 70 percent are threatened with extinction," says Hogan, an assistant research professor at the University of Nevada-Reno.

Hogan dresses like a tourist with a baseball cap and shorts and has the boyish enthusiasm of an explorer. He spends much of the year searching for these large fish.

So far, he has focused mostly on Asia, where he once traveled 36 hours by road to catch the taimen in Mongolia. He just returned from Bhutan, where he scoured the river canyons for mahseer, which can only be caught by the country's monarch.

Hogan said he was drawn to the freshwater ray, known scientifically as *Himantura chaophraya*, because so little is known about it.

Listed as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, it is believed to be found in rivers from Thailand to northern Australia. Scientists only discovered it 18 years ago, and its population is unknown.

"I have so many questions about this stingray," Hogan says. "Is it truly a freshwater species? Where does it breed? What are its migratory patterns?"

Hogan spent the past few years on the Mekong in a futile effort to catch rays, because the nets of Cambodian fishermen were no match for them. Rays also are nearly impossible to spot, since they spend much of their time scrounging for small fish, shrimp, crabs and mollusks that live on the bottom of these muddy rivers.

A few months ago, Hogan got wind of big rays being caught and released by Humphreys' company FishSiam in Thailand.

Unlike the Cambodian fishermen, FishSiam uses modern rods and reels used to catch other big game fish. At first he was skeptical, then excited.

Humphreys seems an unlikely partner in Hogan's quest. With his beady eyes and bald head, Hogan looks the part of bouncer, and his thick Cockney accent can be hard to understand. He has no scientific training.



This photo released by the University of Nevada-Reno, shows American biologist Zeb Hogan posing with a giant stingray in the Mekong River after it was captured by a Cambodian fisherman near Kratie, Cambodia in April 2008.

But he knows how to fish, and his team's success in catching stingrays is almost unmatched in Thailand. Just in the past year, Humphreys and his partner, Wuttichai Khuensuwan, have caught 40 rays on the Ban Pakong and

"Their strength is legendary," he says. "When you see them in the flesh, it is quite humbling."

Catching a ray can be dangerous, he says, especially before its tail has been neutralized. "Crocodile Hunter" Steve

Irwin was killed by a stingray barb in 2006, and a Florida man was critically injured that

same year when struck in the chest by a ray's barb.

Wuttichai Kuachareonsri, a member of Humphreys' crew, stopped fishing for a year after he was stung in the leg by a ray barb. "I never have felt pain like that," he says. "It really frightened me."

On his fishing trip with Hogan,

ON THE NET

WWF: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/science/projects/giantFish.cfm>

National Geographic: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/field/projects/megafishes.html>

IUCN: <http://www.iucn.org>

FishSiam: <http://www.fishsiam.com>

Maeklong Rivers, the largest weighing in at 485 pounds.

Humphreys, who got his start catching carp in West London gravel pits, says he prefers stingrays because of their fight. They routinely break fishing lines, he says, and one took 15 of his men about six hours to bring to the surface.

Wuttichai Kuachareonsri, a member of Humphreys' crew, stopped fishing for a year after he was stung in the leg by a ray barb. "I never have felt pain like that," he says. "It really frightened me."

On his fishing trip with Hogan,

Study: Online banking possibly dicier than assumed

at a security conference, examined the sites of top banks and smaller institutions alike. The researchers aren't detailing which banks had problems, however.

"We want banks to make the right decisions so people who are trying to be careful can do online banking securely," said the paper's lead researcher, Atul Prakash, a professor of computer science and engineering.

The researchers found that many banks silently redirect users to third-party sites, plop "secure login" boxes on insecure Web pages, and improperly use Social Security numbers or e-mail addresses—which an outsider can

figure out—as default user names.

All of those banking tactics put users at risk.

"Conventional wisdom is that the clients—or PCs—are inherently insecure devices," said Avivah Litan, a banking security analyst with Gartner Inc. "What this study shows is that the servers—or the bank and other consumer-facing Web sites—are also inherently insecure."

The research didn't uncover vulnerabilities in the Web sites themselves, or problems with the sites' coding that could allow criminals to break in. Instead, it found design flaws that teach people bad surfing habits.

One of the biggest problems: Even if the login boxes on banks' pages are properly secured—meaning they send and receive encrypted data through a technology known as Secure Sockets Layer—if the full page itself isn't protected with the same technology, it's more difficult to tell whether the site is real or fake.

SSL-equipped sites show a padlock icon in the address bar and signal not only the encryption technology but also that the site's owner is legitimate.

Also: If users aren't notified that they're being taken to another site—say a bank uses a partner site for online bill-paying—then it's hard

Humphreys boasts about "monsters" below the tranquil river and insists it is a matter of time before his team lands a world record ray.

The anglers head to the Ban Pakong and Maeklong rivers just two hours outside Bangkok, winding their way past office towers, Buddhist temples and busy highways. Fish farming pens dot the riverbanks and sounds of construction and puttering boats echo across the water.

Both spots have given up rays in the past. But on the their first day on the Ban Pakong, the fishermen come up empty. Humphreys blames the heavy rains that have swollen the river.

The next day, they have better luck on the Maeklong.

The rod bends almost into the water, and Wirat struggles for almost a half hour as the ray dives under the boat and across the bow.

It finally is brought to the surface, revealing its big bulging eyes and dark, coarse skin. Its tail alone is 12 feet long.

Hogan says catching such a big ray so close to a big city is a sign the species is thriving despite pollution. He is awaiting government permission to launch a two-year study to catch and tag 20 or 30 more rays to better understand their movements.

With that data, Hogan is hoping to do what he has done for the Mekong giant catfish, once almost fished to extinction. Hogan's work helped establish its endangered status and prompted authorities in Laos and Thailand to limit total catches to four a year.

WWF freshwater biologist Chavalit Vidthayanon, who discovered a smaller ray species in Thailand four years ago, agreed more research was needed to better understand the health of the big fish.

"We need to know its exact population and habitat so we can work on conservation and find ways to better protect them," he said.

For the easygoing Hogan, the research could help end what has become an epic journey to find "the king of the river."

"We're getting close to the record and I'm very confident that a fish of record size existed," he says. "The question is whether it still exists."

to determine if the new site is trustworthy, because the online registration certificate carries a different company's name.

So even if they were inclined to dig that deep, consumers could still fall victim to "phishing" scams because they're accustomed to entering personal information into a site that isn't their bank's—and hasn't been clearly vouched for by the bank.

Hackers could take advantage by sending them bogus pages dressed up like the bank's Web site. That site would then redirect to another site under the criminal's control, and users might not question the redirection.

To fight that, the best protection remains: Don't click on links sent in e-mails.

New look at Kindle

By MIKE HIMOWITZ
(C) 2008, THE BALTIMORE SUN

Just before Mother's Day, my wife casually mentioned hearing Amazon.com's announcement that ample supplies of its Kindle electronic book reader were finally on hand.

I'd reviewed the Kindle just after Thanksgiving, and while I liked the concept, the controls were so badly designed that I kept accidentally turning pages every time I moved my hands ever-so-slightly, so I was constantly losing my place.

Being more dexterous, my wife quickly surmounted this obstacle. In fact, she loved the gadget, which allows you to browse more than 120,000 Amazon titles over a wireless network and download a best-seller for 10 bucks in about a minute.

The issue of buying became moot after I returned the review unit, because Amazon announced that it had sold out its Kindle inventory within days and wouldn't be able to fill its backlog of orders for months. So I'd almost forgotten about the reader when my wife casually brought up the subject again in May.

If there's one thing I've learned in 37 years of marriage, it's how to interpret these casual signals: Two days later a Kindle arrived at the door.

Good move, Himowitz. The Kindle was far more successful than the usual chocolate and flowers, and well worth the price tag in matrimonial happiness.

Within a few hours, my wife had downloaded a handful of titles from her favorite authors.

Over the ensuing weeks, she has found the electronic book a delightful companion—thanks to a sharp, reflective screen that's comfortable under



actly the same lighting conditions that make it possible to read a real book.

Because there's no backlight, and Kindle's E-Ink technology uses power only when you "turn" a page, battery life is remarkable, particularly if you keep the radio turned off.

Eventually, I felt compelled to try the Kindle again myself—this time at length to see if my first impressions were valid. So I persuaded my wife to part with the reader for a week and set about reading a mystery novel

she had downloaded.

With enough practice, I got to the point where I hit the Next and Previous page keys mistakenly only five or six times an hour. I also learned to insert lots of electronic bookmarks and "lock" the screen on the current page before putting the Kindle down.

In addition to being a book reader, the Kindle has some terrific features, including a built-in MP3 player and a function that allows correspondents to send you Microsoft Word documents and photos for 10 cents

If Amazon really wants the Kindle to take off, it must lower the price, which is at least \$150 too high for an impulse buy.

happy to return it to her.

Although it generated lots of hype at the outset, it's hard to know just how popular the Kindle has been. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos won't discuss exact sales. But Apple and other gadget makers usually trumpet these figures when they're good, so the lack of hard numbers could be the result of two scenarios.

One is that Amazon rushed the Kindle into the gadget stream; the controls are so bad that the design couldn't have been tested thoroughly by real humans. Then it couldn't ramp up production in time for Christmas. The other is that Amazon didn't want to take a chance on an expensive dud—so it made about 300 Kindles and then bragged about selling out overnight. Taking orders for a popular gadget that's out of stock poses a lot less risk than overstocking something that won't sell.

Meanwhile, there's lots of speculation about Kindle 2.0. The CrunchGear tech blog reports that Amazon insiders expect two new Kindle models starting this fall. The first would be a reader the same general size and shape as the current model, but with controls that don't drive people crazy (designers call this an improved interface).

The second would be a larger model, about the size of an 8 1/2-by-11 sheet of paper, that would be more appropriate for textbooks, technical manuals and other business-oriented reading than the current 6-inch screen.

But if Amazon really wants the Kindle to take off, it must lower the price, which is at least \$150 too high for an impulse buy. It's certainly too high to justify his-and-hers Kindles in our house—as much as I'd like a new model of my own when it's available.

Google unveils reference tool after 7-month test

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Google Inc. is taking the wraps off an Internet encyclopedia designed to give people a chance to show off—and profit from—their expertise on any topic.

The service, dubbed "knol" in reference to a unit of knowledge, had been limited to an invitation-only audience of contributors and readers for the past seven months.

Now anyone with a Google login will be able to submit an article and, if they choose, have ads displayed through the Internet search leader's marketing system. The contributing author and Google will share any revenue generated from the ads, which are supposed to be related to the topic covered in the knol.

The advertising option could encourage people to write more entries about commercial subjects than the more academic topics covered in traditional encyclopedias.

Since Google disclosed its intention to build knol, it has been widely viewed as the company's answer to Wikipedia, which has emerged as one of the Web's leading reference tools by drawing upon the collective wisdom of unpaid, anonymous contributors.

But Google views knol more as a supplement to Wikipedia than a competitor, said Cedric Dupont, a Google product manager. Google reasons that Wikipedia's contributors will be able to use some of the expertise shared on knol to improve Wikipedia's existing entries.

With a seven-year head start on knol, Wikipedia already has nearly 2.5 million English-language articles and millions more in dozens of other languages.

Knol is starting out with several hundred entries. The initial topics covered include an overview of constipation by a University of San Francisco associate professor of gastroenterology and backpacking advice from one of Google's own software engineers.

Unlike Wikipedia, knol requires the authors to identify themselves to help the audience assess the source's credibility. Google doesn't intend to screen the submissions for accuracy, Dupont said, and instead will rely on its search formulas to highlight the articles that readers believe are credible.

Google has had mixed success so far in its attempts to expand beyond its ubiquitous search engine, which generates most of its profits. While products like its e-mail service have been hits, other forays like a listing system called "Base" and a social network called Orkut haven't fared as well.

Tech awards go to plane de-icing goo, headlights

SEATTLE (AP)—Camera flashcubes of the 1960s, high-definition TVs and the Nicoderm quit-smoking patch have at least one thing in common: Each found a place over the years on R&D Magazine's annual list of the 100 most technologically significant new products.

For 46 years, the Rockaway, N.J.-based publication has be-

HELP FILE

By ROB PEGORARO
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Q: We bought an iPod nano and discovered it needs Mac OS X 10.4.8, and we only have 10.3.9. Now we're looking at upgrading OS X (\$129), which itself will require more memory—so this \$149 iPod will cost \$200 more.

A: As this reader discovered, plugging a new iPod nano into

stowed awards to products its editors and outside experts believe represent "quantum leaps of technological improvement."

R&D Magazine acknowledges that obvious advances—a cure for cancer, say—are rare. Indeed, the 2008 list of winners, announced Wednesday, lacked consumer blockbusters, but among the acronyms and techni-

cal jargon, a few with relevance to everyday life stood out.

Japan's Koito Manufacturing Co. made the list for its LED car headlights, which use less energy, last longer and produce a light that's brighter and more like daylight.

Another automotive winner was the "Adaptive Airbag" from Key Safety Systems Inc.

anything that made the current iPods incompatible with OS X 10.3. Apple's prolific pace of operating-system upgrades can leave Mac users worse off than Windows users: The second-most recent OS X release, 10.4 Tiger, arrived in April 2005, while the second-latest Windows version, XP, shipped in October 2001.

Sometimes a statement that an older operating system is "unsupported" for use with a

new gadget means only that the company won't offer help for that mix of software and hardware. Apple, however, has turned "not supported" into "not allowed" by setting iTunes to reject an iPod if it's running the wrong version of OS X.

You can't say Apple misleads buyers. It clearly states that current iPods require OS X 10.4 or newer (and I'd argue it's worth upgrading from 10.3 anyway).

But it's still a mistake for Apple to go out of its way to prevent a new iPod from working on an older OS X release—in the process making some Mac users feel they're being treated more shabbily than Windows users.

The easiest and cheapest way out of this dilemma, should you be in the market for an iPod to hook up to older Mac system software, is to buy a used iPod.

Life & Style

Novelist brings alive the power of women

BEST SELLERS

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Nonfiction

When You Are Engulfed in Flames, by David Sedaris (Little, Brown: \$25.99) Musings on life and smoking.

The Last Lecture, by Randy Pausch with Jeffrey Zaslow (Hyperion: \$21.95) A professor with terminal cancer urges us to seize life's moments.

What Happened, by Scott McClellan (PublicAffairs: \$27.95) The former Bush press secretary says the administration deceived the public about Iraq.

Are You There, Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea, by Chelsea Handler (Simon Spotlight: \$24.95) The talk-show host skewers dating, family and work.

The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne (Beyond Words: \$23.95) Life's secrets, distilled from oral tradition, literature, religion and philosophy.

Fleeced, by Dick Morris and Eileen McGann (Harper: \$26.95) How the average American is being sold out by interests foreign and domestic.

The Soloist, by Steve Lopez (Putnam: \$25.95) The Los Angeles Times columnist befriends a homeless musician.

The Monster of Florence, by Douglas Preston with Mario Spezi (Grand Central: \$25.99) The search for a killer who preyed on Italian lovers.

Audition, by Barbara Walters (Knopf: \$29.95) The pioneering newswoman recalls her life and career.

My Stroke of Insight, by Jill Bolte Taylor (Viking: \$24.95) A brain scientist describes her massive stroke and the steps she took to a full recovery.

Fiction

Chasing Darkness, by Robert Crais (Simon & Schuster: \$25.95) When a man cleared of a murder charge is found dead, Elvis Cole is called to account.

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle, by David Wroblewski (Ecco: \$25.95) A mute dog breeder is banished by his uncle in this twist of Hamlet.

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, by Junot Diaz (Riverhead: \$24.95) A sci-fi-loving nerd and his immigrant family are haunted by the past.

The Dawn Patrol, by Don Winslow (Knopf: \$23.95) A surfing private eye trying to unravel an insurance scam tangles with thugs in San Diego's Pacific Beach.

The Art of Racing in the Rain, by Garth Stein (Harper: \$23.95) A dog's-eye view of love, loyalty and sacrifice.

Fearless Fourteen, by Janet Evanovich (St. Martin's Press: \$27.95) Bounty hunter Stephanie Plum faces a stalker, a kidnapper and an old robbery.

The Enchantress of Florence, by Salman Rushdie (Random House: \$26) A traveler arrives at the Mughal emperor's court with a beguiling tale.

The Host, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: \$25.99) Alien invaders take over the minds of humans.

Netherland, by Joseph O'Neill (Pantheon: \$23.95) An equities analyst's life is upended after Sept. 11, when his wife and son flee New York for London.

The Last Oracle, by James Rollins (William Morrow: \$26.95) The Sigma Force battles scientists who may have bioengineered the end of humanity.

By SWATI PANDEY
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Novelist Karen Essex remembers when she encountered the name "Aspasia," a courtesan in ancient Greece, while reading Plutarch in graduate school.

"Plutarch suddenly starts talking about Aspasia as Pericles' mistress," Essex said, mentioning the Athenian leader.

Aspasia "had the respect of the most intelligent men in an Athens in which women weren't even citizens and were completely sequestered. It was very titillating, and just a tease, because Plutarch mentions her, and that's it."

Where Plutarch kept mum, Essex has filled in the blanks.

Her fourth historical novel, "Stealing Athena," expounds on the power of art and the strength of women who exercised free will even when they had the fewest rights.

But "Stealing Athena" seems uniquely relevant, as historical novels gain popularity and powerful women are again very much in the public eye.

"Stealing Athena" parallels the lives of Aspasia and Mary Elgin. Aspasia witnesses the Parthenon being built; Mary watches it being taken down by her husband, Lord Elgin, who, in a still-contested move, lugged the marbles that bear his name back to England.

Both women flout traditional roles and both suffer for it.

"Women made virtually no progress from ancient Greece to post-Enlightenment England," Essex said.

Essex isn't so convinced of women's progress in post-millennial America, either.

"There's this resurgence now of the discussion about whether women should work or not if they have a child," Essex said. "I don't know about you, but I've been through two graduate programs and I have to feed myself and support my daughter. There's been a real shortage of men who



LOS ANGELES TIMES

Karen Essex says she was partly inspired to write historical fiction because of the omission of women from most histories, except for the stray mention of sexual liaisons.

want to give me money."

Essex made it through an interdisciplinary program at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., before which she worked as a film executive in Los Angeles, where she'd moved to pursue costume design.

After realizing that she'd "forgotten to be a writer," Essex got a master's degree in fine arts from Goddard College in Vermont in 1999 and sold her thesis to Warner Books.

Now she splits her time between writing novels and scripts in Studio City. That thesis became "Kleopatra," the first in a two-novel series that rounded out the seductress of popular memory, depicting her as an intelligent and fierce ruler rather than just a conqueror of powerful men.

"I wanted to look at women in power, not women who are oppressed. We're all in the patriarchy, so how do we get our power?" she said. "We haven't always been in chains, not all of us."

Essex admits that part of her inspiration to write historical fiction came from the omission of women from many histories, except for sexual liaisons. Essex's third novel, "Leonardo's Swans," was the book

that set off Essex's popularity.

It follows a rivalry between sisters who seek to be muses for the legendary artist. It has sold more than 40,000 copies, according to Nielsen BookScan. In 2007, Essex won Italy's Premio Roma prize for foreign fiction.

"Europeans have so much more of a command of art and history; they're an older culture," she said.

Essex's books have contemporary resonance for Americans too, whether or not they know their history. They're especially meaningful to women in a time when Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., can run for president but still face potent sexism, even from liberal quarters, and when Michelle Obama encounters tightly circumscribed expectations for how a potential first lady should act.

"They're so threatening to people, to women as well as to men," Essex said, referring to the two. "To eviscerate these women on the basis of their not being the 'right' kind of woman—whatever that is—is appalling. And it's appalling that we're still discussing what the right kind of woman is."

Essex's historical novels join a field increasingly filled with

female writers rehabilitating female characters, such as Ashley Crownover's "Wealtheow: Her Telling of Beowulf" and Susan Fraser King's "Lady MacBeth," noted Christopher M. Cevasco, editor and publisher of the historical-fiction-focused Paradox magazine.

"Female figures in history have tended to be viewed as extremes, either the virtuous extreme or the dastardly extreme," Cevasco said. "They almost tend not to be described as real people. I think Karen succeeds in making her characters come alive as women rather than as caricatures."

Historical fiction in general is enjoying a boom, as literary authors such as Phillip Roth, with his alternate-historical "The Plot Against America," and Salman Rushdie with "The Enchantress of Florence" are trying their hands at puppeteering historical characters.

Essex avoids reading historical fiction, so the invented parts won't interfere with her research into actual events and people.

For "Stealing Athena," that research required studying and often directly quoting her characters' letters, journals and speeches. Few plot points are pure invention; where they are, they seek to fill a gap in recorded history—for example, Essex had to imagine why Aspasia might have been prosecuted for impiety.

Essex also traveled to the locations where the book takes place, having found inspiration for the novel when seeing the Elgin marbles at the British Museum.

"The ideas come to me just by looking at a piece of art," she said. "It's a magical process really."

The same marbles inspire Essex's characters to mystical and spiritual thoughts as well: Aspasia speaks of "a spell ... cast by the gods over everyone who entered" the Parthenon. Mary says to Elgin after the removal of one of six Caryatids that "it appears as if a family member has been ripped from the clan."

McKusick, pioneer in medical genetics, dies at 86

TOWSON, Md. (AP)—Dr. Victor A. McKusick, a key architect of the Human Genome Project and a winner of the National Medal of Science, has died. He was 86.

Officials at Johns Hopkins University, where McKusick was a professor of genetics, said he died Tuesday in Towson, Maryland—after complications from cancer.

McKusick, whose work explored the links between genetics and disease, won the top U.S. scientific prize in 2001.

"Today we have lost a giant," said Johns Hopkins Medicine dean and chief executive officer Edward D. Miller. "He spent virtually all of his incredible career at Hopkins, but his influence and

legacy reach around the world."

McKusick founded the Johns Hopkins Division of Medical Genetics in 1957 and in 1973 became chairman of its department of

medicine and physician-in-chief of The Johns Hopkins Hospital. Officials said he became professor of medical genetics in 1985 and remained active in that role until last year.

As a young man, McKusick planned to enter the ministry, but changed his mind after suffering from a severe Streptococcus infection in his armpit in 1937. He first attended Johns Hopkins as a medical student in 1943.

McKusick trained as a cardiologist, but an encounter with a tall patient with an inherited disorder called Marfan syndrome altered the course of his career.

He devoted his career to medical genetics in the late 1950s, a few years after DNA was discovered.

"Some of my colleagues thought I was committing professional suicide because I had a reputation in cardiology and was shifting over to focus for the most part on rare, unimportant conditions, and so forth," McKusick said in an interview earlier this year



McKusick

with The (Baltimore) Sun.

In 1966, McKusick published the first edition of *Mendelian Inheritance of Man*, with 1,500 entries on inherited disorders. Now the publication has grown to more than 20,000 entries. McKusick was one of the first to propose the human genome map in 1969 and helped establish the Human Genome Project. The sequence was completed in 2001. He also helped establish the journal *Genomics*.

McKusick and his colleagues taught a two-week course in genetics each summer in Bar Harbor, Maine. It became the most respected course in the subject, attracting in more than 4,000 students, doctors and researchers.

Plenty of reasons to have a cigar

By PAUL BROWNFIELD
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—His face is a triptych of granite-like features. When the camera focuses on Ron Perlman, it captures, with clarity, the sum of his distinguished parts—the lantern jaw, the deep-set eyes and the high, square forehead.

Perlman is 6 feet 2, which hardly conveys the berth he has occupied on-screen over the years, in movies such as 1982's "Quest for Fire," where he played a Neanderthal, and 1995's surrealist French film "City of Lost Children," where he was a tender circus strong man.

The movies, though, have exaggerated his features, so much so that you half-expect to be lunching with a giant. While physically imposing, the actor who

walked into a West Hollywood eatery the other day was not, technically, huge. Wearing jeans and an untucked shirt, Perlman made his way to the table with a slight limp, the result of a broken toe he suffered on the Budapest, Hungary, set of "Hellboy II: The Golden Army," which opened Friday and earned \$35,885,000, ranking No. 1 at the box office.

It has been Perlman's semi-obscure fate to exist, on camera, under layers of carefully applied grotesquerie. This includes the TV series "Beauty and the Beast," which gave him a kind of folk fame 20 years ago.

"Hellboy II: The Golden Army"—in which Perlman battles a vengeful prince of darkness, a mammoth troll, flesh-eating tooth fairies and that hellacious army of the subtitle—required three hours in the makeup chair on a good day, Perlman said, six hours on other days.

But one senses that Perlman has finally found all the artifice to be liberating. No other role has gotten to the core of his personality—or done nearly so much for his career—as Hellboy, the benevolent but churlish demon with a blue-collar ethos and freak-show brawn, first shepherded from the pages of Mike Mignola's graphic novels to the big screen in 2004 by Mexican director Guillermo del Toro.

It was Perlman's physical resemblance to the comic book Hellboy—the heavy brow, angular head and imposing presence—that made him an ideal muse for the director. And with "Hellboy II: The Golden Army," del Toro, riding the wave of his Oscar-winning "Pan's Labyrinth," seems even freer to mine the dichotomy of his main character.

The "Hellboy" legend is a nurture-over-nature paradigm. Hellboy, after all, should have been all evil—brought to Earth by Nazi occultists to be an agent of doom, only to end up working for the good guys at a top-secret government hideout (it's in New Jersey) in the battle against paranormal malevolence.

Down in his messy room of an antechamber, the beast becomes, via the love of his adoptive, government scientist father (John Hurt), a physically indestructible weapon and peckishly human.

Yes, Hellboy is red, massive and has a tail, but he shaves his horns to fit in. He has a fondness for house cats. He talks like a hard-boiled detective. He watches too much TV and eats a great many pancakes. And his mood is entirely dictated by how things are going with his enduring love Liz Sherman (Selma Blair), the life partner who can morph into a fireball.

As Perlman said of the character: "He's basically just a flailing mass of sentiment and emotion."

Which is why, in "Hellboy II," amid all of del Toro's signature monsters (the "troll market" sequence is dizzying with them), there is a rather remarkable scene in which Hellboy, having had a row with Liz, stands mournfully in the shower, beer in hand, as the Eels song "Beautiful Freak" scores the scene.

"I get chills up my spine thinking about my first reaction to the emotional world that Guillermo ex-

Actor Ron Perlman poses for a portrait on Monday, June 30, 2008.



In this image released by Universal Pictures, Ron Perlman is shown in a scene from, "Hellboy II: The Golden Army."

plores," Perlman said. "... I have trouble capturing his true genius. Because it's so unique and so much unlike what anybody else is grappling with, in any form of culture. You see Guillermo continuing to use kind of the same set pieces and grapple with what is truly monstrous, and it always has this juxtaposition of the conventional human versus the conventional creature/monster—and what is truly monstrous."

At 58, Perlman is, to be sure, the summer's most unusual comic-book action star, amid a season in which Robert Downey Jr. is Iron Man, and the combo platter of Christian Bale and the late Heath Ledger are the stars of "The Dark Knight," due later this month.

He is, by contrast, a child of New York in the 1950s who at 14 had already reached 6-foot-2 and weighed 290 pounds, he said. "A big, fat, gawky kid," he recalled, who would later flunk the physical required to get into Lehman College.

That feeling of outsider-ness no doubt contributed to his fast friendship with del Toro, a comic-book aficionado who waited out seven years of studio skepticism about the idea of Perlman as the "Hellboy" lead, taking development meetings with a clay sculpture of Perlman as the character.

The two first met in the early '90s, when del Toro, then a fledgling horror director with a costume-effects business in Mexico City, sent Perlman a flattering letter, hoping he would agree to be in his first film, the 1993 low-budget and creepy "Cronos." (The director had seen the actor while studying the makeup in "Quest for Fire" and "Beauty and the Beast.")

Del Toro's letter happened to catch Perlman at one of a series of fallow points in his career, when he was wondering if he should leave Los Angeles and move his family back to New York.

Over lunch, Perlman talked philosophically of times when he was overextended on credit cards, of painting

his house to unload it. His words hinted at a thicket of struggle and self-recrimination—a feeling, Perlman noted, that lends itself to doing "Hellboy."

If del Toro rescued him from an abyss, it has been Perlman's fate to be more appreciated by filmmakers abroad than at home. Pre-"*Hellboy*," his three biggest movie parts—"Quest for Fire," "The Name of the Rose" and "City of Lost Children"—all came from Frenchmen. In more recent years, del Toro would call with a part for him in one of his films, such as "*Alien: Resurrection*" or "*Blade II*."

"I always think Ron was created in the mold of Russian realism sculpture," said del Toro. "Meaning the proportions of his hands and his head are just massive. The fact is he's not a terribly tall guy, [but] he does carry himself like an immense guy. The camera is instantly, magnetically attracted to [him]."

Today, Perlman says, his career is exactly as he imagined it would be when he first saw the "*Hunchback of Notre Dame*" with Charles Laughton.

"*Hellboy II*" has to be a watershed experience for me," Perlman said. "I'm starting to see the mainstream part of Hollywood finally include me in their discussions."

To wit: The menacing crucifix tattoo decorating the actor's neck these days is fake—a body prop for a new TV series for the FX network called "*Sons of Anarchy*" from Kurt Sutter, a writer-producer on the down-and-dirty cop series "*The Shield*," in which Perlman stars as the leader of a Hell's Angel gang trying to keep the town of Charming, Calif., well, "charming."

He will also costar with Josh Hartnett and Demi Moore in "*Bunraku*," young Israeli director Guy Moshe's upcoming action-fantasy based on a form of Japanese puppet theater.

And then there is the possibility, no doubt, of "*Hellboy III*," by which time Perlman will have hit 60—a demonizing age in Hollywood, though Hellboy's dealt with worse.



CELEBRITY EXTRA

By CINDY ELAVSKY
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: I just rented "Before the Devil Knows You're Dead" and thought Ethan Hawke did a wonderful job. He certainly has come a long way since "Dead Poet's Society." I know his ex-wife, Uma Thurman, just announced her engagement, but I never hear about Ethan's personal life. Has he settled down with anyone since he and Uma divorced? -- Hailey J., Asheville, N.C.

A: As you might recall, Ethan and Uma's marriage came to a screeching halt when Uma discovered that Ethan was having an affair with their children's nanny, Ryan Shawhughes. Earlier this year, Ryan became pregnant, and the couple married in a private ceremony this past June.

■ ■ ■

Q: I recently saw the movie "I Am Legend," starring Will Smith. It seems to resemble a movie that I saw many years ago starring Charlton Heston. What was the name of that movie, and are they based on the same story?

—Tim R., Lancaster, Ohio

A: The 2007 movie adaptation "I Am Legend" was based on the 1954 book of the same name by Richard Matheson. The book was adapted three times: first in 1964 as the movie "The Last Man on Earth," starring Vincent Price; again in 1971 as "The Omega Man," starring Charlton Heston; and finally as Will Smith's 2007 version, "I Am Legend." "The Omega Man" takes place six years in the future after a biological war between China and the Soviet Union wipes out most of the Earth's population with a manmade plague. Heston plays Dr. Robert Nev-



Ethan Hawke

ille, the man whose task it is to save humanity.

■ ■ ■

Q: One of my favorite TV crime series is "Criminal Minds." I often hear the term "unsub" used when referring to a serial killer or a person they are investigating. What does this term mean? -- Edward G., Cape Coral, Fla.

A: "Unsub" is a law-enforcement term, which means "unknown subject" of an investigation.

■ ■ ■

Q: I was watching "King of Kings" this past Easter and was very moved by it. It starred Jeffrey Hunter, and he was absolutely magnificent. Can you tell me a little about him and how he died?

—Nancy M., Summerfield, Fla.

A: Jeffrey Hunter began acting in his early teens in local theater and radio in Wisconsin.

He served in the Navy during World War II and then attended Northwestern University, where he studied drama. In his early movie career, Jeffrey often worked with the great John Ford. It was Ford who recommended him for the role of Jesus in "King of Kings."

While Jeffrey tried to concentrate on his movie career, many people will always remember him as Capt. Christopher Pike, the original captain of the starship Enterprise from the pilot episode of "Star Trek." In 1969, at the young age of 42, Jeffrey suffered a stroke. A few days later, he suffered another stroke while recovering at home, fell and fractured his skull. He died the following day.

Have a question for Cindy? E-mail her at letters@cindeyelavsky.com, or write to her in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Jill Jackson's Hollywood

By JILL JACKSON
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

It's tourist time in Tinseltown, and one of the main attractions is the HOLLYWOOD sign high in the hills above town, and herein lies its history: When the sign was erected in 1923, it did not spell HOLLYWOOD. It was HOLLYWOODLAND, the name of a development featuring Moorish mansions and Spanish haciendas. The most famous event associated with the sign was the suicide jump of a young actress named Peg Entwistle, who tried to parlay her success on the Broadway stage into a Hollywood film career. It didn't work. So she climbed to the top of the "H" and jumped to her death. Now, the Beachwood canyon where the sign is located is a fashionable area, with many celebs living in mansions in the shadow of the sign, and packs of tourists eyeing it every day. ... Another spot on a tourist's tour is the Los Altos apartment building in midtown on Wilshire Boulevard. This historic landmark once housed Bette Davis, Ava Gardner, Peter Finch, William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies, and is now renting. There are one- and two-bedroom apartments available. Rental prices start at \$1,700—cheap for this town—and the building is "pet friendly" to dogs and cats.

It puts me away. The names some of the stars tack on their kids. Gwyneth Paltrow dubbed her daughter Apple, as you no doubt know. Tom and Katy call theirs Suri, and recently Nicole Kidman named her new one Sunday Rose!

Photographer to the Hollywood stars Tony Rizzo sends his Most Memorable Movie Moments. They are: Julie Andrews singing "The Sound of Music" in the opening scene of the film. ... Peter Finch in "Network" opening the window and screaming, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" ... Bette Davis and

Joan Crawford in "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane" when Bette says, "You know we have rats in the cellar!" ... When Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz" tells Toto, her little dog, "I don't think we are in Kansas anymore." ... Kevin Kline in "In and Out" getting macho lessons from a tape. ... And Christopher Reeve catching a falling Margot Kidder in "Superman" saying, "I've got you, Miss," as she replies, "But who's got you?" Thanks, Tony. C'mon you all. Let's hear from you. Write to me in care of KFWS, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

Action is starting up after all the strikes and strike threats. One is a film titled "I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell." How's that for a title and a premise? It's an adaptation of the bawdy best-seller by Trucker Max. In the film, Max goes to a friend's bachelor party, where he ensnares the groom in a lie that threatens the wedding. After being banned from the wedding, Max attempts to get back in his friend's good graces. Sounds kind of silly to me, but after the strike I guess filmmakers are taking what they can get. Matt Czuchry, who starred on the television show "Gilmore Girls," will play Max.

■ ■ ■

BITS 'N' PIECES: Another Alfred Hitchcock idiosyncrasy. Whenever he borrowed money, no matter what the sum, he always paid it back in coins. Can you imagine \$20,000 in nickels and dimes? ... Annette Bening is the newest member of the Motion Picture Academy Board of Directors. She's also a wonderful actress, ditto mother, and the love of Warren Beatty's life. ... Arnold Schwarzenegger, now the governor of California as we all know, is always well-dressed and covered up. Did you know, or do you remember, that back in 1990, in the film "Total Recall," he mooned and showed it all?

TOP OF THE CHARTS

TOP 10 POP SINGLES
This Week Last Week

1. Katy Perry No. 1 "I Kissed a Girl" (Capitol)
2. Rihanna No. 4 "Take a Bow" (SRP/Def Jam)
3. Lil Wayne feat. Static Major No. 2 "Lollipop" (Cash Money)
4. Leona Lewis No. 3 "Bleeding Love" (Syco/3)
5. Coldplay No. 6 "Viva La Vida" (Capitol)
6. Chris Brown No. 8 "Forever" (Jive)
7. Natasha Bedingfield No. 10 "Pocketful of Sunshine" (Phonogenic)
8. Jonas Brothers No. 5 "Burnin' Up" (Hollywood)
9. Plies feat. Ne-Yo No. 7 "Bust It Baby Part 2" (Big Gates/Slip-N-Slide)
10. Miley Cyrus No. 16 "7 Things" (Hollywood)

TOP 10 ALBUMS

1. Lil Wayne No. 2 "Tha Carter III" (Cash Money/Universal Motown)
2. Coldplay No. 1 "Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends" (Capitol)
3. Soundtrack No. 3 "Camp Rock" (Walt Disney)
4. G Unit new entry "T.O.S. (Terminate on Sight)" (G Unit/Interscope)
5. John Mayer new entry "Where the Light Is: John Mayer Live in Los Angeles" (Columbia)
6. Various Artists No. 6 "NOW 28" (EMI/Sony BMG/Universal/Zomba)
7. Kid Rock No. 12 "Rock N Roll Jesus" (Top Dog/Atlantic)
8. Usher No. 7 "Here I Stand" (LaFace)
9. Rihanna No. 10 "Good Girl Gone Bad" (SRP/Def Jam)
10. Disturbed No. 9 "Indestructible" (Reprise)

TOP 10 HOT COUNTRY SINGLES

1. Blake Shelton No. 2 "Home" (Warner Bros.)
2. Alan Jackson No. 4 "Good Time" (Arista Nashville)
3. Montgomery Gentry No. 1 "Back When I Knew It All" (Columbia)
4. Kenny Chesney No. 3 "Better As a Memory" (BNA)
5. Brooks & Dunn No. 6 "Put a Girl In It" (Arista Nashville)
6. Dierks Bentley No. 5 "Trying To Stop Your Leaving" (Capitol Nashville)
7. Sugarland No. 8 "All I Want To Do" (Mercury)
8. Keith Anderson No. 10 "I Still Miss You" (Columbia)
9. Keith Urban No. 12 "You Look Good In My Shirt" (Capitol Nashville)
10. Taylor Swift No. 13 "Should've Said No" (Big Machine)

TOP TEN MOVIES

1. Hellboy II: The Golden Army (PG-13) Ron Perlman, Selma Blair
2. Hancock (PG-13) Will Smith, Charlize Theron
3. Journey to the Center of the Earth (PG) Brendan Fraser, Josh Hutcherson
4. WALL-E (G) animated
5. Wanted (R) James McAvoy, Angelina Jolie
6. Get Smart (PG-13) Steve Carell, Anne Hathaway
7. Meet Dave (PG) Eddie Murphy, Gabrielle Union
8. Kung Fu Panda (PG) animated
9. Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G) Abigail Breslin, Julia Ormond
10. Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13) Harrison Ford, Cate Blanchett

TOP 10 VIDEO RENTALS

1. 10,000 BC (PG-13) Steven Strait (Warner)
2. Fool's Gold (PG-13) Matthew McConaughey (Warner)
3. The Spiderwick Chronicles (PG) Freddie Highmore (Paramount)
4. Jumper (PG-13) Hayden Christensen (20th Century Fox)
5. The Bucket List (PG-13) Jack P. Johnson (Warner)
6. Definitely, Maybe (PG-13) Ryan Reynolds (Universal)
7. Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins (PG-13) Martin Lawrence (Universal)
8. National Treasure 2: Book of Secrets (PG) Nicolas Cage (Disney)
9. In Bruges (R) Colin Ferrell (Universal)
10. The Other Boleyn Girl (PG-13) Natalie Portman (Sony Pictures)

TOP 10 DVD SALES

1. 10,000 BC (PG-13) (Warner)
2. The Spiderwick Chronicles (PG) (Nickelodeon Video)
3. Definitely, Maybe (PG-13) (Universal)
4. Fool's Gold (PG-13) (Warner)
5. The Bucket List (PG-13) (Warner)
6. Futurama: The Beast With a Billion Backs (PG-13) (Universal)
7. Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins (PG-13) (Universal)
8. National Treasure 2: Book of Secrets (PG) (Disney)
9. Jumper (PG-13) (20th Century Fox)
10. Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark (PG) (Paramount)

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Matt Czuchry

Comics, film and figurine fans flock to Comic-Con

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The most passionate Spider-Men, Storm Troopers, Harry Potters and other pop-culture fanatics are headed south for their annual pilgrimage. Comic-Con, the country's biggest comic-book convention, begins Thursday at the San Diego Convention Center.

More than 100,000 people a day - many in the costumes of their favorite characters - will fill the sprawling seaside space during the four-day convention. They'll try out the latest video games, seek out collectible books and toys, restock their T-shirt and costume collections and get a preview of anticipated films and TV shows.

The annual convention, now in

its 38th year, draws the most avid fans around - the kind who will blog about what's cool and generate online attention that money can't buy. (Just ask the people who cashed in on "Iron Man," which started as a metallic buzz at last year's convention that built all year before eclipsing the \$300 million mark at the domestic box office this summer.)

As superheroes go, so goes Comic-Con. And oh, what superheroes have become: Five of the top 20 summer movies are based on comic book characters, including "The Dark Knight," the record-shattering Batman juggernaut that took \$158.4 million in its first weekend (beating the previous record

set by 2006 Comic-Con darling "Spider-Man 3").

"This summer there's been an embarrassment of riches," said Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige. "Comic-Con is dipping your toe in that water to see how rabid your fan base is."

Big-screen previews contending for early buzz this year include "300" director Zack Snyder's adaptation of the graphic novel "Watchmen"; and "Terminator Salvation," the long-awaited new installment in the franchise. The much-anticipated "Star Trek," on the other hand, has promised no previews or panel discussions, but is still bound to generate ample fanboy chatter.

"Comic-Con attracts a really vocal and discriminating entertainment fan, so it's a great venue to showcase exciting products," said Sarah Greenberg, co-president of theatrical marketing for Lionsgate. "With blogging and the Internet ... people are communicating directly from peer to peer about matters of taste and really quickly you can get a beat on what they're talking about."

"It's an amazing place to find all those word-of-mouth generators in one location," said Rob Friedman, co-chairman and chief executive of Summit Films, which is making its first trek to Comic-Con. The studio is presenting three movies, including its banner Christmas title, "Twilight," a teen-vampire love tale.

"This is completely unique to any audience that you'd be seeing at the normal film-festival circuit," he said. "They're much more fan-oriented. They're much more enthusiastic and not as critical. They come with an eye to enjoy and observe."



AP
In this July 28, 2007 file photo, Sam McClellan, dressed as Captain America, asks a question at a panel discussion for the Marvel Studios film "The Incredible Hulk" at the Comic-Con convention in San Diego.

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X Files: I Want to Believe

Fri & Sat 1:25 4:20 7:25 9:50
Sun thru Thurs 1:25 4:20 7:25

David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson
Thriller, Sci-Fi, Supernatural • Rated PG

Synopsis

The always-complicated relationship between Fox Mulder and Dana Scully moves in unexpected directions. Mulder continues his unshakable quest for the truth, and Scully, the passionate, ferociously intelligent physician, remains inextricably tied to Mulder's pursuits.



The Step Brothers

Fri & Sat 1:15 4:05 7:10 9:35
Sun thru Thurs 1:15 4:05 7:10

Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly
Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis

Brennan Huff, a sporadically employed thirty-nine-year-old, lives with his mother, Nancy Dale Doback, a terminally unemployed forty-year-old lives with his father, Robert. When Robert and Nancy marry and move in together, Brennan and Dale are forced to live with each other as step brothers. As their narcissism and downright aggressive laziness threaten to tear the family apart, these two middle-aged, immature, overgrown boys will orchestrate an insane, elaborate plan to bring their parents back together. To pull it off, they must form an unlikely bond that maybe, just maybe, will finally get them out of the house.



Dark Knight

Fri & Sat 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
Sun thru Thurs 1:00 4:00 7:00

Christian Bale, Heath Ledger
Superhero Film, Action, Fantasy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Fri & Sat 1:05 @ 7:05 @
Sun thru Thurs 1:05 @ 7:05
Andy Samberg, Cheryl Hines
Family-Oriented Comedy • Rated PG



Hellboy II

Fri & Sat 1:10 4:30 7:15 9:40
Sun thru Thurs 1:10 4:30 7:15

Selma Blair and Ron Perlman
Monster Film, Action, Fantasy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Fri & Sat 1:20 4:10 7:20 9:30
Sun thru Thurs 1:20 4:10 7:20
Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan
Comedy, Musical Romance • Rated G



Journey To The Center Of The Earth

Fri & Sat @ 4:15 @ 9:45
Sun thru Thurs @ 4:15 @

Brendan Fraser, Anita Briem
Adventure, Fantasy, Action • Rated PG

Synopsis

Fri & Sat 1:30 4:25 7:30 9:30
Sun thru Thurs 1:30 4:25 7:30
Will Smith, Charlize Theron
Action, Comedy • Rated PG 13

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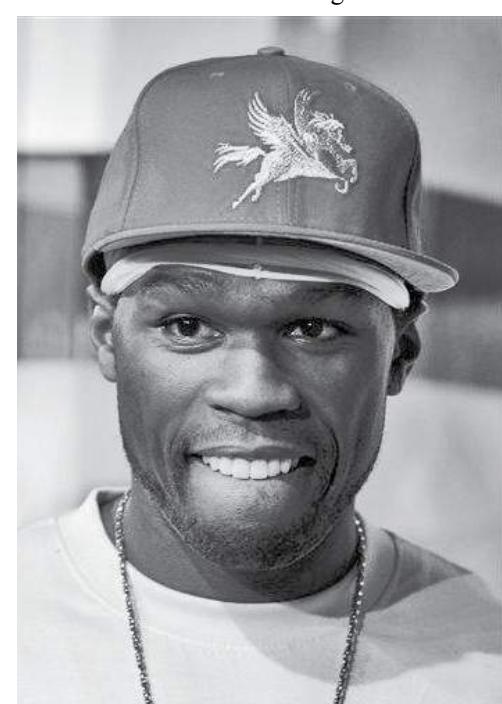
50 Cent sues Taco Bell in NY over ad campaign

NEW YORK (AP)—50 Cent has sued Taco Bell, claiming the fast-food restaurant chain is using his name without permission in advertising that asks him to call himself 99 Cent.

The rapper says in a federal lawsuit filed Wednesday that the Mexican-themed chain features him in a print ad asking him to change his name to 79 Cent, 89 Cent or 99 Cent. His real name is Curtis Jackson.

The rapper's court papers say the ad is part of Taco Bell's "Why Pay More?" campaign, which promotes items for under a dollar, including Cinnamon Twists for 79 cents, Crunchy Tacos for 89 cents and Bean Burritos for 99 cents. The papers say the Irvine, Calif.-based company sent a bogus letter requesting the name change to the news media but not to the rapper.

The rapper's lawyer, Peter D. Raymond, said his client didn't learn about the letter or that he was featured in the ad campaign until he saw a news report about it. Raymond said his client is seeking \$4 million in damages. Taco Bell Corp. spokesman Rob Poetsch issued a statement saying: "We made a good faith, charitable offer to 50 Cent to change his name to either 79, 89 or 99 Cent for one day by rapping his order at a Taco Bell, and we would have been very pleased to



AP
In this July 28, 2007 file photo, Sam McClellan, dressed as Captain America, asks a question at a panel discussion for the Marvel Studios film "The Incredible Hulk" at the Comic-Con convention in San Diego.

make the \$10,000 donation to the charity of his choice."

This isn't the first time 50 Cent has sued over his name or image.

In July 2007, he filed a \$1 million lawsuit accusing an Internet ad company of using his image without permission in a game called "Shoot the Rapper," in which the player pretends to shoot him.

The game shows 50 Cent walking in an ad across the top of a Web page while the viewer is encouraged to shoot him by aiming and clicking with the mouse, the rapper's court papers said; a successful shot results in a misty cloud of red, and then the viewer is directed to another Web page, where the ad firm's clients sell goods and services.

The rapper is a well-known victim of gun violence: He was shot outside his grandmother's Queens home in 2000 and rapped in one of his biggest hits, "In da Club," about being hit with a few shells.

The rapper has been nominated for 13 Grammys, including for the song "In da Club" and the album "Get Rich or Die Tryin'." In 2005, he starred with Terrence Howard in a semi-autobiographical movie based on that album. He also starred in the 2006 film "Home of the Brave" as a soldier returning home from Iraq.

Bale attends 'Dark Knight' premiere in Spain

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)—Christian Bale swept into Barcelona on Wednesday night to attend a glittering Spanish premiere of "The Dark Knight," appearing calm as he greeted fans a day after reports surfaced that his mother and sister had accused him of assault.

A 15-car motorcade delivered Bale and his co-stars to the red carpet, where the 34-year-old actor greeted hundreds of fans outside the city's Coliseum Theater. Bale spent half an hour signing autographs, looking relaxed in a tailored dark blue suit and asking each autograph seeker's name.

About 25 camera crews waited outside the theater. Bale did not speak to reporters and made no comment about the allegations that he assaulted his mother and one of his three sisters at a London hotel on Sunday.

The actor's wife, Sibi, smiling

broadly, and actress Maggie Gyllenhaal stood by Bale as he attended to fans. Then the Welsh-born actor, who plays millionaire recluse Bruce Wayne and his bat winged alter-ego, entered the theater to watch the film.

"We expected some excitement but have truly been taken aback by all the media attention," Warner Bros. representative Gernot Dudda said.

Bale said through his lawyers the assault allegations were false Tuesday, hours after he was arrested, questioned by London police and released on bail. He spent four hours talking with authorities but was not charged.

British media reported that Bale's mother and sister told police he assaulted them at the Dorchester Hotel in London on Sunday night, a day before attending the European premiere of "The Dark Knight." The Sun newspaper said the complaint

was filed by sister Sharon Bale and mother Jenny Bale.

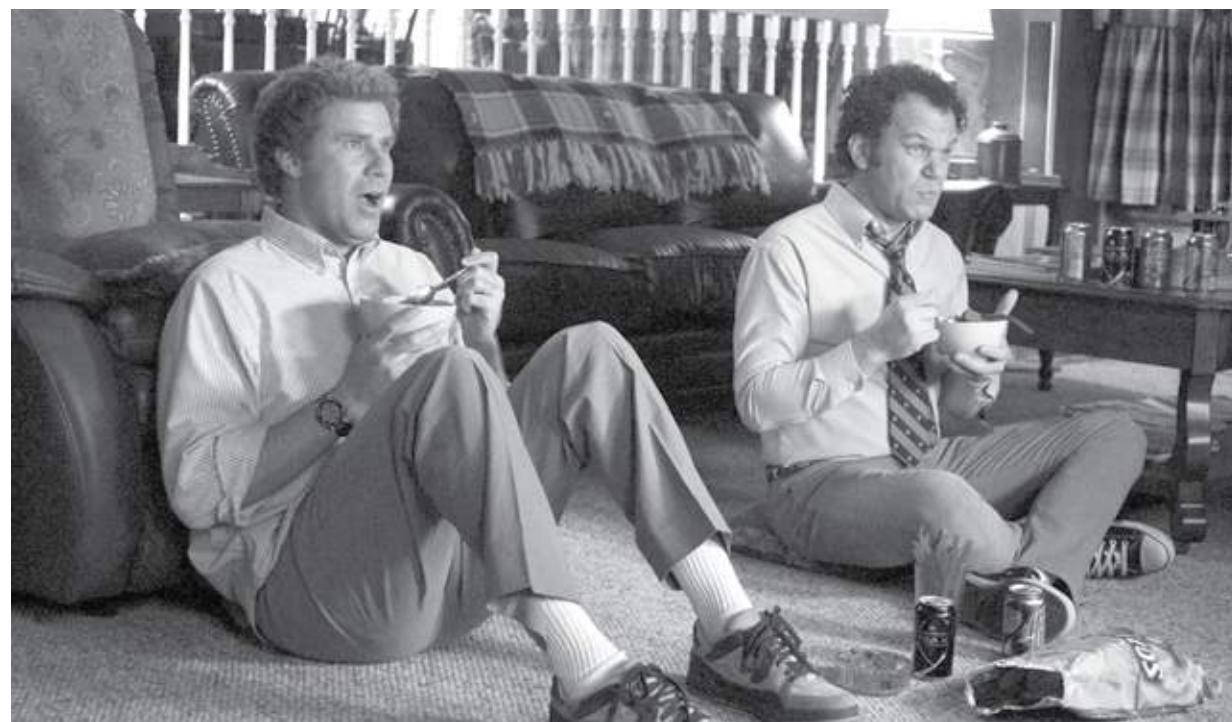
Wednesday night outside the Coliseum's elegant baroque facade, built in 1923 and inspired by the Opera in Paris, bat lights flickered as fans dressed as The Joker waited to go in. Fellow actor Aaron Eckhart and director Christopher Nolan also spent time greeting fans and signing autographs.

Bale first made a splash as the child star of Steven Spielberg's "Empire of the Sun" in 1987. His screen credits also include "American Psycho," "The Machinist" and "Batman Begins."

The film set a box-office record with \$158.4 million during its opening weekend in the U.S. last week.

British actor Christian Bale poses during a photocall for 'The Dark Knight' film in Barcelona, Spain, Wednesday, July 23, 2008.

AP



Will Ferrell, left, and John C. Reilly, co-stars of the film "Step Brothers," mingle at the premiere of the film in Los Angeles, Tuesday, July 15, 2008.

lowing broad formulas. When "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" proved a hit, it wasn't long before they were encountering the Invisible Man, the Mummy or Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in subsequent romps.

While players such as Hope and Crosby mixed it up with solo careers, the idea of splitting up successful comedy teams to let them pursue individual projects would have been bad business to studio executives.

"People weren't screaming for a Stan Laurel solo vehicle," said Reilly, a big Laurel and Hardy fan. "I just got this biography about the two of them, so I'm sure I'll find out a little more about the dynamics that kept them working together, but I think they just worked. A fat guy and a skinny guy. That's what people wanted to see."

Old-style comedy teams were tailored to the players' strengths, the lovably dopey Laurel opposite bossy Hardy, zany Costello opposite stoic and flustered Abbott.

Few actors today would be willing to put up with such narrow confines.

"In the old days, traditional comedy teams had a straight man and the comic," said Wes Gehring, who teaches film at Ball State University and specializes in comedy. "Everybody now wants to be the comic. Everybody wants to be the funny one. Nobody wants to be the second banana now."

Audiences also are sensitive to suspicions that they're being sold a bill of goods. Comedy needs to feel fresh and

spontaneous, and continually pairing the same faces might bring an air of formulaic premeditation to a movie.

"You never want to appear needy or desperate with comedy," McKay said. "You always want the illusion of, oh my God, here's an incredibly funny person. They happen to step in front of the camera, oh my God, they're hilarious. Like a wild animal if you can catch them in front of the camera. It's really an incredible thing to see."

"And the second you start to see any sort of calculation happening, people feel like that's somehow cheap or makes it all fake."

Modern Hollywood has had some instances of comedy actors teaming up several times beyond mere sequel reunions, among them Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor and Dan Aykroyd and John Goodman.

Informal ensembles also spring up, such as the gang of improvisers in Christopher Guest's flicks or the troupe in the Judd Apatow comedy machine.

"I wish there were more people with that attitude of like, it's fun to see this collection of people or these two guys together," Ferrell said.

Added Reilly: "I would work with people I know over and over if I had my choice. There's a few directors I've met that I really love. There's a few actors that I've met that I really love, and if I did nothing but movies with those people for the rest of my life, it would be great."



In this 1958 file photo, Bob Hope, right, and Bing Crosby take a break during a recording session in Hollywood, Ca.

'Step Brothers' Ferrell, Reilly reunite as duo

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Bob Hope and Bing Crosby might be on the road to nowhere if they tried to team up today the way they did in old Hollywood.

Today's funny folks reunite now and then, like Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly in "Step Brothers," a follow-up to their 2006 comedy "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby."

But cynical audiences now might carp at perpetual pairings that were a movie staple in the days of Hope and Crosby, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy or Bud Abbott and Lou Costello.

Ben Affleck and Matt Damon or Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson have hung around together on screen or popped up in cameos in each other's movies, but even they have to be mindful of moviegoers who gripe that Hollywood dishes out too much of the same old thing.

"It became a stigma, which is kind of unfair," Ferrell told The Associated

Press in an interview alongside Reilly. "Could Hope and Crosby exist today without getting, like, here they go, another 'Road' picture? Let me guess, 'Road to Bali.' They'll probably open

with a song, then they'll get in trouble, then more of the same. You'd just get picked apart."

Adam McKay, director of "Step Brothers" and "Talladega Nights," said escalating salaries also can make it uneconomical to pair up top comedy stars, who can pull in \$20 million a movie.

Movie marketing is built heavily around solo stars - the new Adam Sandler comedy, the latest Eddie Murphy farce - and marquee talent sometimes can be reluctant to give up any of the limelight, McKay said.

"One of the reasons that this all came together again is that Will is such a cool guy. A lot of the bigger actors or comedians, they don't want to share with another person," Reilly said. "That's why so many of these movies are one-man-show kind of situations, and Will is much more like a theater actor in that way. He's willing to share the stage."

"Step Brothers" casts Ferrell and Reilly as middle-aged losers - unemployed slackers, one living with his dad (Richard Jenkins), the other with his mom (Mary Steenburgen). When

their parents wed, the two become instant family, sibling rivalry springing up from the start.

Sharing the stage was the bread-and-butter for some comedy stars in old Hollywood. Along with duos, there were comedy teams such as the Marx Brothers, the Ritz Brothers and the Three Stooges that worked as inseparable entities.

Unlike today's free-agent stars, actors were under contract to particular studios, which tended to keep many of their performers in predictable niches that were familiar and comfortable to fans.

"Laurel and Hardy, the Three Stooges, Abbott and Costello, these guys were willing to make a lifetime commitment to the act, and it took them literally a good chunk of their life to get the rhythm and timing down," said Rob Farr, founder of Slapstick, a comedy film festival in Arlington, Va., featuring flicks from early Hollywood. "These days, no actor with an ego wants to tie themselves down to a partner for decades at a time."

Producers churned out far more movies then, much of their output fol-

Sister can't knit together family torn by its history

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My half-brother, "Jace," and I had a complicated childhood. My father had an explosive temper and a disdain for children in general. He was abusive, and our mentally ill mother was absent during his rages.

I had my share of abuse, but it was nothing compared to how Jace was treated. His biological father lived in another state and rarely made contact, and my father never formally adopted him. It left Jace with profound feelings of abandonment.

My parents are finally divorced now. Afterward, Dad's behavior toward me changed dramatically. He's no longer abusive and is even fun to be around. However, he still maintains a palpable distance from Jace.

Jace is an exceptional person with an outgoing personality and a zest for life. He has two beautiful children and one more on the way. Dad has seen the oldest only once, and that was after I begged him for months to visit. It saddens me, and I end up overcompensating by spoiling Jace's kids with gifts, even though I live 2,000 miles away.

I know I can't make Dad be a part of Jace's life, but he's the only father Jace has ever known. Is there any way to open Dad's eyes? If not, how can I fill the gap?

SADDENED SISTER IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SISTER: Regardless of how your father's attitude toward you has changed, he will never get my vote for Father of the Year. That he took out his frustrations on you and your brother is despicable. He never accepted Jace, and from the time he married your mother considered her son to be excess baggage—nothing more.

You cannot force open the eyes of someone whose heart is closed, so quit trying. You already do more than your share to "fill the gap" as a loving aunt, but understand that Jace's children will never miss what they have never known.

Fortunately, your brother seems to be emotionally resilient. It appears he has gone on with his life. He is married and is building a new family, which may help him heal the abuse he suffered as a young man. However, if he cannot let go of his feelings of abandonment, he should consult a licensed psychotherapist because it may take professional help to put his past to rest.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Mona," and I decided to separate a few months ago. She filed for divorce, and during the two months cooling-off period we spent a lot of time talking to each other. After some consideration, we reconciled.

Now that we're back together, I have learned that Mona sold her wedding ring to pay for some living expenses. We discussed purchasing another one, but apparently it's not a top priority on her to-do list. She has also said she doesn't want to buy her own ring or split the cost. I still wear mine, but feel as though I'm the only one who's committed to the relationship. Any thoughts?

HAVING DOUBTS IN DALLAS

DEAR HAVING DOUBTS: I'll give you my gut reaction. A wedding ring does not make a marriage; love, commitment and concern for the feelings of the other party do. That Mona got rid of the ring so quickly tells me she was also through with the marriage.

Who buys the next ring is the least of your worries. Listen to your gut. It's sending you an important message. You and Mona are not out of the woods yet. Hie thee to a marriage counselor.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)



Dear Abby

Forbes: Vince Vaughn is best value for the money

NEW YORK (AP)—Vince Vaughn is the best star for the buck, says Forbes magazine.

Vaughn raked in \$14.73 of gross income for studios for every dollar he was paid for "The Break-up," "Wedding Crashers" and "Dodgeball," the magazine calculated for its special entertainment issue, now on newsstands.

"That's because until recently his salary was relatively low, and the films he was in, like 'Wedding Crashers' and 'The Break-up,' had modest budgets yet did extremely well at the box office worldwide (\$285 million and \$205 million, respectively)," Forbes said.

Forbes said it compiled the Ultimate Star Payback list by looking at the stars' last three films that opened wide in at least 1,000 theaters before 2008 and were made in the last five years.

It calculated the gross income for each film by adding half the worldwide box office and the first three months of wholesale DVD revenues and then subtracting its budget. The gross income was divided by the actor's total compensation to derive his or her payback for the movie.

Tobey Maguire ranked No. 2 on the list, with a gross income return of \$13.44 for each dollar

of his pay for the "Spider-Man" sequels and "Seabiscuit." Julia Roberts was in third place with a gross income return of \$13.19.

Brad Pitt ranked fourth with \$12.73, followed by Naomi Watts and Matt Damon (\$12.16 each), George Clooney (\$11.56), Jennifer Aniston (\$10.48), Hugh Jackman (\$9.90) and Ben Stiller (\$9.50).

The highly paid, highly bankable Will Smith—who reliably led the July Fourth weekend with a \$66 million debut for "Hancock"—ranked 21st with a gross income return of \$5.64 for every dollar spent on the big-budget superstar.

Nicole Kidman is at bottom of the list, at No. 35. Her high-paying roles in "The Golden Compass," "The Invasion" and "Bewitched" averaged only \$1.01 of gross income.

Kidman's ex, Tom Cruise, brought in \$3.99—not altogether surprising, given the imbalance of his high salary demands with the 2007 box-office flop "Lions for Lambs."

Jim Carrey averaged \$4.11 per dollar earned in "The Number 23," "Fun With Dick & Jane" and "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events."



AP
In this Feb. 16, 2008 file photo, actor Vince Vaughn is shown before a rematch between middleweight champion Kelly Pavlik and Jermain Taylor at the MGM Grand hotel and casino in Las Vegas.

Balthazar Getty says he's separated from his wife



NEW YORK (AP)—Balthazar Getty says he's separated from his wife and is embarrassed by recent photos of him kissing a topless Sienna Miller in Italy.

"The breakdown of a marriage is a very difficult and painful experience, especially when children are involved," Getty, 33, told The Associated Press, revealing that he's split from wife Rosetta, with whom he has four children.

"In light of the fact that many pictures have surfaced in print and on the Internet, which has

caused myself and my family great embarrassment, I felt it necessary to at least acknowledge publicly that, yes, indeed my wife and I have separated and I will not be commenting any further."

Getty stars in ABC's family drama "Brothers & Sisters." His film credits include "Lord of the Flies," "Young Guns II" and "Ladder 49."

The 26-year-old Miller, who was once engaged to Jude Law, has appeared in the films "Factory Girl," "Layer Cake" and "Alfie."

AP
In this Monday, April 28, 2008 file photo, actor Balthazar Getty arrives at The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' presentation of A Conversation with "Brothers & Sisters", in the North Hollywood area of Los Angeles.

2 eagles named by Miley, Billy Ray to be set free

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. (AP)—Two 14-week-old American bald eagles named by Disney star Miley Cyrus and her country singer father, Billy Ray Cyrus, will be released into the wild Thursday at the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.

The American Eagle Foundation has released more than 90 eagles from Dolly Parton's Dollywood theme park in East Tennessee since the 1990s. The eagles were named Tennessee (after the Cyrus' home state) and Hope (Miley's given middle name before she had it legally changed this year).

The stars of the Disney Channel's hit "Hannah Montana" won't be there in person to release the eagles, which were hatched earlier this spring at the foundation's center. But foundation President Al Cecere said



AP
This photograph provided by the American Eagle Foundation shows two American bald eagles in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., Wednesday, July 23, 2008. The 14-week-old eagles were named Hope, left, and Tennessee, right, by Disney star Miley Cyrus and her country music singer father, Billy Ray Cyrus.

there will be plenty of her fans to see the eagles take flight from the artificial nesting tower located on Douglas Lake.

The bald eagle, once on the brink of extinction, was taken off the endangered-species list last year.

'Watchmen' video game will prequel film

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Watchmen" is already getting a prequel—and the film's not out until next year.

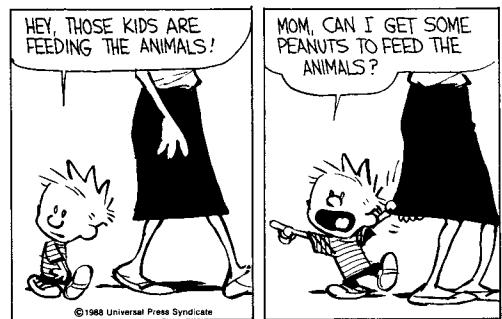
Warner Bros. announced Wednesday it will release an episodic downloadable video game developed by Deadline Games that will prequel next year's big-screen adaptation of the "Watchmen" graphic novel pegged to the film's March debut. Another game that will take place following the first game will be released later in 2009 at the same time as the "Watchmen" DVD.

In the games, players will be able to combat foes as the pointy-eared Nite Owl (played by Patrick Wilson in the film) and inkblot mask-wearing Rorschach (Jackie Earle Haley). The mature action-brawler will be released for Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and Windows PC and will match the visual style of the film, which is being directed by "300" director Zack Snyder.

"Watchmen" is set in an alternate world where superheroes have been outlawed. The landmark graphic novel, written by Alan Moore and illustrated by Dave Gibbons, won a Hugo Award in 1988. The film adaptation is set for release March 6, 2009, and also stars Billy Crudup as Dr. Manhattan, Carla Gugino as Silk Spectre and Jeffrey Dean Morgan as The Comedian.

Pastimes

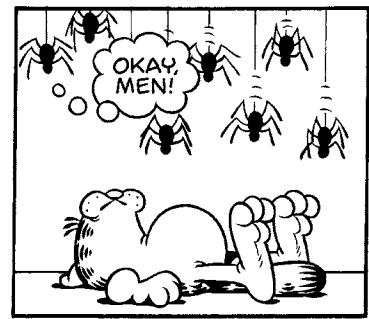
Calvin and Hobbes



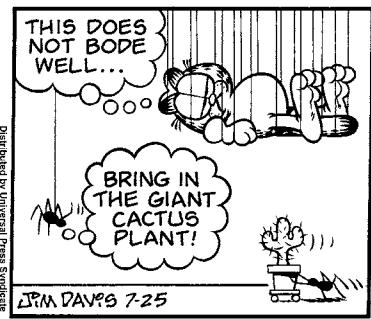
By Bill Waterson



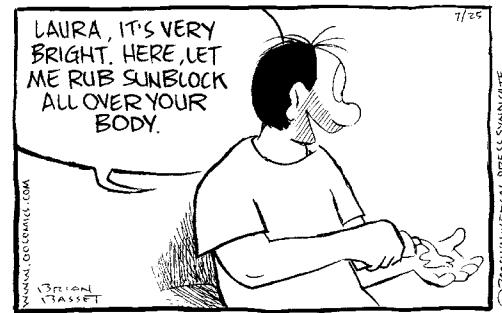
Garfield®



By Jim Davis



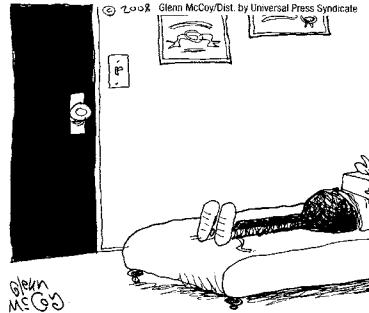
Adam@home



By Bryan Basset



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

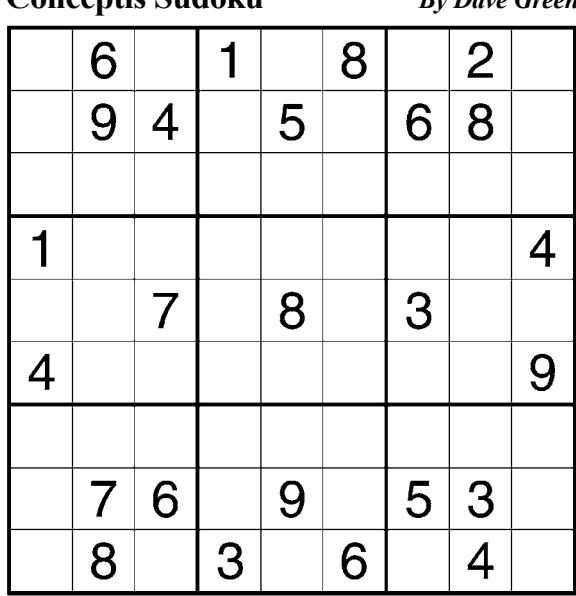
ACROSS											
1	Pump up the volume	35	Timid	36	"Grey's Anatomy" extra	3	Content-ment sound	26	Option from Howie Mandel		
4	Brown bean sauce	37	Future chrysal-ides	4	Treeless tract	5	Peruser of a manual, maybe	27	Gumbo need		
8	Mafia bigwig	39	Solidify	40	Choose (for)	6	Second person	28	—-do-well		
12	Old French coin	41	Fold	45	Soared	7	Took for granted	29	Dinner for Dobbin		
13	Pairs	48	Reaps	50	"National Treasure" star	8	Prop for Groucho	32	Word usually used with "or"		
14	On the rocks	51	Falco or McClurg	9	Expert	10	Corral	33	Private student		
15	Upstarts	52	Spigot	11	Rhyming praise	16	Food item	35	Gullible sort		
17	Hereditary component	53	Groovy	20	Upper limit	20	Upper limit	36	Ganglion components		
18	Bar	54	Agts.	23	Swerve	23	Rx, for short	38	Purchase from Pat Sajak		
19	Ms. Thurman	55	One or more	24	Sea flock	42	"The Thin Man" dog	39	Rx, for short		
21	Spring-time abbr.	DOWN	1	Uraei	25	Tardy	43	Ollie's co-star	40	Rx, for short	
22	Big name in comic books	2	Castle	23	Swerve	44	Catch sight of	44	Catch sight of	45	Govt. agcy.
26	Meta-physical poet	3	protection	24	Sea flock	46	The 7 Faces of Dr. —	46	The 7 Faces of Dr. —	47	Id counterpart
29	Whammy	4	protection	25	Tardy	48	Awake	48	Awake	49	Citric quaff
30	Mound stat	5	LIFT DAHL CIA	5	DAHL CIA	50	SHRINE	50	SHRINE	51	USA RASP ESSE
31	Scratched (out)	6	OMAR ALOE URN	6	ALOE URN	52	FEEL BALTIC SEA	52	FEEL BALTIC SEA	53	USA RASP ESSE
32	Bankroll	7	WATERFLEA POT	7	WATERFLEA POT	54	USA RASP ESSE	54	USA RASP ESSE	55	Yesterday's answer 7-25
33	Bivouac structure	8	STABAT SHONE	8	STABAT SHONE	56		56		57	
34	Beati-tudes verb	9	EM MOTIF	9	EM MOTIF	58		58		59	
11	Solution time: 25 mins.	10	HACK WAG STAR	10	HACK WAG STAR	60		60		61	
12		11	ONO ONE EWE	11	ONO ONE EWE	62		62		63	
13		12	TYPO USE CALF	12	TYPO USE CALF	64		64		65	
14		13	A WAKE PI	13	A WAKE PI	66		66		67	
15		14	SHRINE	14	SHRINE	68		68		69	
16		15	OWL BALTIC SEA	15	OWL BALTIC SEA	70		70		71	
17		16	FEEL BALTIC SEA	16	FEEL BALTIC SEA	72		72		73	
18		17	USA RASP ESSE	17	USA RASP ESSE	74		74		75	
19		18	USA RASP ESSE	18	USA RASP ESSE	76		76		77	
20		19	USA RASP ESSE	19	USA RASP ESSE	78		78		79	
21		20	USA RASP ESSE	20	USA RASP ESSE	80		80		81	
22		21	USA RASP ESSE	21	USA RASP ESSE	82		82		83	
23		22	USA RASP ESSE	22	USA RASP ESSE	84		84		85	
24		23	USA RASP ESSE	23	USA RASP ESSE	86		86		87	
25		24	USA RASP ESSE	24	USA RASP ESSE	88		88		89	
26		25	USA RASP ESSE	25	USA RASP ESSE	90		90		91	
27		26	USA RASP ESSE	26	USA RASP ESSE	92		92		93	
28		27	USA RASP ESSE	27	USA RASP ESSE	94		94		95	
29		28	USA RASP ESSE	28	USA RASP ESSE	96		96		97	
30		29	USA RASP ESSE	29	USA RASP ESSE	98		98		99	
31		30	USA RASP ESSE	30	USA RASP ESSE	100		100		101	
32		31	USA RASP ESSE	31	USA RASP ESSE	102		102		103	
33		32	USA RASP ESSE	32	USA RASP ESSE	104		104		105	
34		33	USA RASP ESSE	33	USA RASP ESSE	106		106		107	
35		34	USA RASP ESSE	34	USA RASP ESSE	108		108		109	
36		35	USA RASP ESSE	35	USA RASP ESSE	110		110		111	
37		36	USA RASP ESSE	36	USA RASP ESSE	112		112		113	
38		37	USA RASP ESSE	37	USA RASP ESSE	114		114		115	
39		38	USA RASP ESSE	38	USA RASP ESSE	116		116		117	
40		39	USA RASP ESSE	39	USA RASP ESSE	118		118		119	
41		40	USA RASP ESSE	40	USA RASP ESSE	120		120		121	
42		41	USA RASP ESSE	41	USA RASP ESSE	122		122		123	
43		42	USA RASP ESSE	42	USA RASP ESSE	124		124		125	
44		43	USA RASP ESSE	43	USA RASP ESSE	126		126		127	
45		44	USA RASP ESSE	44	USA RASP ESSE	128		128		129	
46		45	USA RASP ESSE	45	USA RASP ESSE	130		130		131	
47		46	USA RASP ESSE	46	USA RASP ESSE	132		132		133	
48		47	USA RASP ESSE	47	USA RASP ESSE	134		134		135	
49		48	USA RASP ESSE	48	USA RASP ESSE	136		136		137	
50		49	USA RASP ESSE	49	USA RASP ESSE	138		138		139	
51		50	USA RASP ESSE	50	USA RASP ESSE	140		140		141	
52		51	USA RASP ESSE	51	USA RASP ESSE	142		142		143	
53		52	USA RASP ESSE	52	USA RASP ESSE	144		144		145	

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5951 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

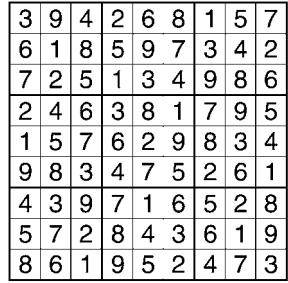


Difficulty Level ★★★★

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

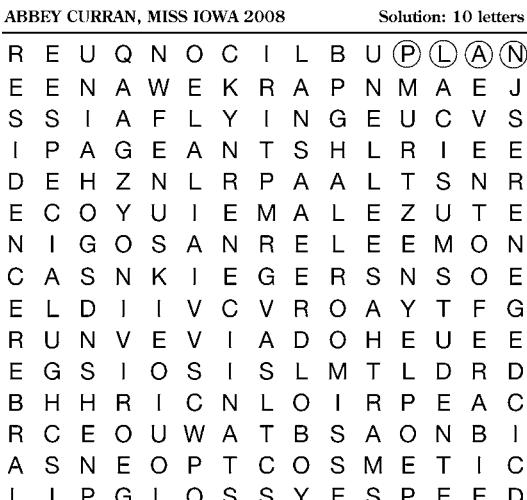
WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ABBEY CURRAN, MISS IOWA 2008

Solution: 10 letters



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Achiever, Advocacy, Barefoot, Bold, Cerebral, Conquer, Cosmetic, Degeneres, Ellen, Event, Farmer, Flying, Gowns, Hall, Heel, Hogs, Keweenaw, Lip gloss, Living, Martha, Miss, Motto, Musical, Pageants, Palsy, Park, People, Physical, Plan, Public, Pursue, Reigning, Residence, Room, Soul, Speaking, Special, Speed, Student, Talented, Television, Trump

Yesterday's Answer: Opinionated

SALE: The topics of "Wonderword for Kids" appeal to younger fans but the puzzle-difficulty matches what you've come to expect from Wonderword. For a limited time, the book is on sale for just \$4 each (U.S. funds only), payable to Universal Press Syndicate, Inc., 1000 3rd Street, Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-226-6734, ext. 9868. Sorry, no online orders for this special offer.

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• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)

- \$25
- \$35
- \$45
- \$55

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233-5641
Open **7 Day a week**
9:00 AM-9:00 PM

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Saturday, July 26 & Sunday, July 27

7:30AM - 4:00PM

KAGMAN III

after the fire station

*** FOLLOW THE SIGNS ***

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Please contact Billy at
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beautiful view of Saipan. Featuring a private view balcony,
fully furnished. FREE wireless DSL, 24-hour water, night-time
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Island Game Club. Contact Emil
De Belen @ 483-3645/233-5100

WHATZIT Solution:
Fishing for compliments

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or
name in this arrangement of letters.

well done!
good shot!
angling three cheers!
bravo!

Find today's solution in this section

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LOST PASSPORT

Name : Teng, Fenhuai
D.O.B. : Nov. 29, 1979
Passport No. : G13456406
Contact No. : 285-9686

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publication date

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- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day
prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met.
No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the
first day of publication. Errors should be called in before
noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to
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necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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\$25

5-LINER AD
\$35

3-LINER AD W/ PHOTO
\$45

5-LINER AD W/ PHOTO
\$55

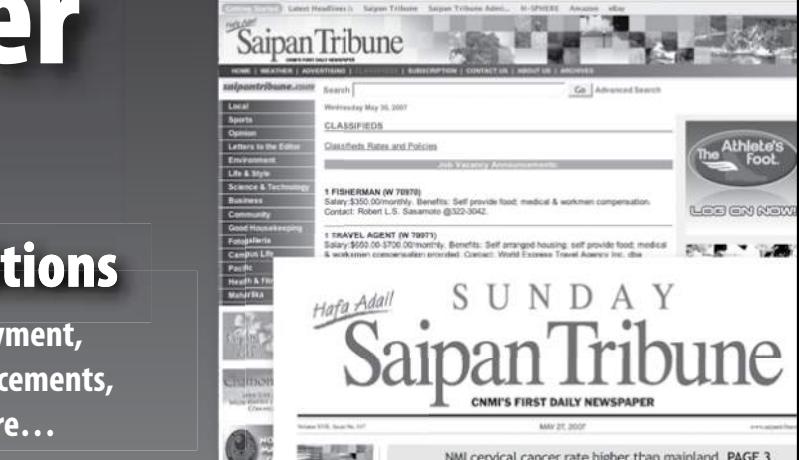
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Call now at **235-2769**
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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



Source: Goodell monitoring Favre situation



MILWAUKEE (AP) — NFL commissioner Roger Goodell is monitoring the ongoing rift between the Green Bay Packers and Brett Favre. A person with direct knowledge of Goodell's interest said the commissioner has spoken with Packers management several times recently as tensions mounted between the three-time MVP and his team.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks.

ESPN.com first reported Goodell's interest in the Favre predicament, indicating that Goodell encouraged Packers general manager Ted Thompson to survey teams around the league to try to find a trade partner in hopes of resolving it quickly.

With the Packers committed to moving forward with Aaron Rodgers as their starter and Favre apparently still intent on reversing his decision to retire in March—although there have been no reports that Favre has formally petitioned Goodell for reinstatement—the best outcome for both parties could be a trade.

And Tampa Bay is emerging as perhaps the most likely destination for Favre, although it is unclear whether Favre would be willing to play for the Buccaneers.

NFL.com reported Tuesday that the Packers had spoken to several teams to gauge their interest in a trade for Favre. Tampa Bay officials have publicly downplayed interest in trading for Favre, but Buccaneers quarterback Chris Simms told the St. Petersburg Times that Bucs general manager Bruce Allen asked him about Favre last week.

"He asked if I felt Brett would be able to come back and be good here if he didn't have a lot of reps in training camp," Simms said, according to the



AP

Former Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre, right, jokes with Frank Winters during a news conference before the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame induction banquet Saturday, July 19, 2008, at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.

paper. "I said I thought he would but there would have to be some compromise with coach (Jon) Gruden. He'll just want the play called and to drop back and throw it in there. But it's something we talked about."

Gruden was a Packers assistant coach from 1992-94 and runs a version of the West Coast offense Favre would be familiar with.

The Packers play the Buccaneers Sept. 28 in Tampa.

Chicago Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher said he "can't imagine" seeing Favre anywhere other than Green Bay, but isn't surprised that he wants to play again.

"He loves football, and I think he kind of made the decision when the season was over," Urlacher said. "He was tired, he probably was worn down, like he said and he made a decision that he didn't want to stick with. But he's Brett Favre, he can do whatever

he wants. I don't know what's going to happen, but I would like to see him playing somewhere next year."

But Urlacher said Chicago wasn't a likely destination for Favre.

"For us? I don't think that's a possibility," Urlacher said. "If they do trade him, I don't think it's going to be in our division, No. 1. Maybe not even in our conference."

Favre made an appearance at Lambeau Field on Saturday to present for-

mer teammate Frank Winters for induction to the Packers' Hall of Fame, but declined to discuss his rift with the team. Favre accepted a team MVP award that night, calling himself "an old, gray-haired quarterback showing I can still do it."

Favre retired in early March, but recently has been having second thoughts about playing in 2008. But the latest, and most intense, episode in several off-seasons' worth of Favre's flip-flopping on his future in football was met with lukewarm enthusiasm by the Packers, who spent the offseason planning to move forward with Rodgers.

Favre asked to be released from his contract, a request the team has no plans to grant. The next step for Favre could be to petition Goodell for reinstatement, a move that would force the Packers to release him or place him on their active roster. He also could be traded.

The Packers also have filed tampering charges against the Minnesota Vikings, suspecting that interest from the Vikings is the main reason Favre has changed his mind about playing in 2008.

Favre's rights belong to the Packers until his current contract expires after the 2010 season.

In an interview with Fox News last week, Favre criticized Thompson for being untruthful with him. Packers officials have gone out of their way not to criticize Favre, instead laying out a specific timeline of their dealings with him in the offseason in hopes that fans will understand why the team decided to move forward without No. 4.

The most significant episode in their timeline came in late March, when Favre led the Packers to believe he was going to unretire and they were prepared to welcome him back—only to change his mind once again and stay retired.

comfortable afternoon at Olivet Nazarene University.

Star center Olin Kreutz (Achilles' tendon) and newly acquired running back Kevin Jones (knee) were placed on the physically unable to perform list, while defensive tackle Dusty Dvoracek (calf) and guard Chester Adams (stomach) were put on the non-football injury list.

But it was the absence of the speedy No. 23 that created a buzz on the first day of a camp that will feature an open competition for the starting quarterback's job between Grossman and Kyle Orton.

Grossman won a coin flip at a meeting Wednesday and worked with the first team on the first day. And now they will alternate with the first unit each practice, with Orton getting that opportunity on Thursday.

But when they'll be able to throw to Hester is not clear.

"He's got to do what he's got to do and I'm not really going to comment on it," Grossman said.

Bears coach Lovie Smith said he had spoken with his Hester.

"I don't have any idea how long it will be. We would like to get him out here as soon as possible," Smith said.

"I know he would like to be out here. He realizes how important this work is, especially this early work with him becoming a full-time receiver."

Hester missing in action on 1st day of Bears camp

BOURBONNAIS, Ill. (AP) — Devin Hester, who has electrified the NFL with 11 punt and kickoff returns for touchdowns in his first two seasons, skipped the Chicago Bears' first training camp practice Wednesday in a holdout.

Hester, a two-time Pro Bowler, was placed on the Bears' Reserve/Did Not Report list.

"I'm not coming," Hester told the Chicago Tribune in a phone interview. "I have to make a statement. I showed by going to (organized team activities) that I was a team player. But then, I just felt like they weren't taking it seriously that I wanted to get a new deal."

Hester, who also played wide receiver last season, has two years remaining on his initial deal. He was the Bears' second round-draft pick in 2006.

In addition to his four kickoff returns and seven punt returns for touchdowns over two seasons, he also returned a missed field goal 108 yards for a TD and took the opening kickoff of the 2007 Super Bowl 92 yards for a score.

As a receiver last season, trying to learn the nuances of the position with the hope someday of being a go-to pass catcher, he had 20 receptions, with an 81-yard TD.



In this Dec. 30, 2007 file photo, Chicago Bears cornerback Devin Hester salutes fans after his two touchdowns lifted the Bears to a 33-25 win over the New Orleans Saints at Soldier Field in Chicago.

"I can't go out and play this year making \$445,000. Come on, man," Hester said.

The Bears have given new deals this offseason to Lance Briggs, Tommie Harris, Brian Urlacher, Desmond Clark and Alex Brown. And

on Wednesday they signed this year's first-round pick, tackle Chris Williams of Vanderbilt, to a five-year deal reportedly worth \$16 million.

General manager Jerry Angelo said after practice Wednesday he was surprised and disappointed that

Hester was a no-show.

"Unexpected. We thought Devin was going to be here. As you know, we've been negotiating with Devin for a while and we are continually negotiating with him as well. So I really don't know why he isn't here today," Angelo said.

Angelo said he'd talked a few days ago to Eugene Parker, Hester's agent.

"He floated it out there, but I didn't really take it serious because, as I say, we are still talking, we're still in the process, there's no closure. Usually when you say, 'Hey, it's over, take it or leave it, we're out of money,' you might get a reaction like that. But as you're continuing on in negotiations as we have been, it is surprising."

Parker could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Angelo said the Bears didn't necessarily have a pecking order this offseason for getting new contracts done with players.

"We did tell Devin we were going to address his situation and we have," Angelo said. "That's where it is. The timing of it maybe wasn't satisfactory to him, but again, those things just kind of run their course."

Hester wasn't the only player missing the first day of drills on a warm but

Galarraga, Cabrera pace Tigers to 7-1 win, sweep of Royals



KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) —

Armando Galarraga carried a perfect game into the seventh inning, Miguel Cabrera drove in three runs and the Detroit Tigers beat the Kansas City Royals 7-1 Wednesday to complete a three-game sweep.

Galarraga retired the first 18 batters before David DeJesus led off the seventh with a single to right on a full-count pitch. To that point, the 26-year-old rookie right-hander had allowed just two fly balls to the outfield and struck out six.

He wound up allowing a run in the seventh on three singles and a walk, but left the bases loaded.

Red Sox 6, Mariners 3, 12 innings

At Seattle, Mike Lowell hit a two-run single off Sean Green in the 12th inning, and the Red Sox took advantage of two outfield errors for their first sweep at Seattle in 15 years.

The Red Sox entered the series having lost eight of 11 on the road, but flew home for a weekend against the Yankees after their first three-game sweep on the road this season.

Jonathan Papelbon (4-3), pitching a third consecutive day, escaped a jam of his own creation in the 11th inning. Craig Hansen worked the 12th for his second save in four chances.

Jacoby Ellsbury began the 12th with a single off Green (2-3). A hit-and-run groundout by Dustin Pedroia got Ellsbury to second before an intentional walk to J.D. Drew. Kevin Youkilis followed with a liner that Willie Bloomquist couldn't handle, and Lowell unloaded the bases with his second hit of the game. Sean Casey made it 6-3 with a single that drove in Youkilis.

White Sox 10, Rangers 8

In Chicago, Carlos Quentin hit two home runs, including the go-ahead, three-run shot during a five-run eighth inning to help the White Sox rally.

Quentin's go-ahead homer came on the first pitch from Rangers closer C.J. Wilson, who entered in relief of Eddie Guardado with two on and two out. It was the third multihomer game of the season for Quentin, whose shot in the fifth barely cleared the center field wall.

Octavio Dotel (4-4) pitched the eighth and Bobby Jenks the ninth for his 19th save.



Detroit Tigers starting pitcher Armando Galarraga throws in the first inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals, Wednesday, July 23, 2008, in Kansas City, Mo.

Angels 14, Indians 11

In Anaheim, California, Jeff Mathis had four hits with a career-high six RBIs, including his first grand slam in Major League Baseball, and Casey Kotchman had a career-best five hits for the Angels.

Los Angeles padded its American League West Division lead to 10 games over Oakland with a season-high 19 hits that included four by Howie Kendrick, who also drove in three runs. It was the first time in Angels history that three players each had four or more hits in the same game.

Yankees 5, Twins 1

In New York, Mike Mussina baffled the

Twins for eight innings, Alex Rodriguez hit a two-run double and the Yankees won their 10th straight at home.

Justin Christian also drove in two runs for New York, which completed a perfect post-break homestand with sweeps of Oakland and the Twins.

The Twins did not get a runner past second against Mussina (13-6), who scattered six hits, retired 14 of the first 17 batters he faced, and walked none for the third straight start.

Rays 4, Athletics 3

St. Petersburg, Florida, James Shields allowed three runs pitching into the ninth inning, and Jonny Gomes

Sastre wins 17th stage of Tour de France, the last day in the Alps



ALPE D'HUEZ, France (AP) — Carlos Sastre won Wednesday's 17th stage of the Tour de France, the hardest ride this year up three huge Alpine climbs, to take the overall lead from CSC team-mate Franck Schleck.

Sastre took the yellow jersey by speeding ahead of the main title contenders in the final ascent of the 210.5-kilometer (130.8-mile) ride from Embrun to L'Alpe d'Huez.

"I suffered a lot on the way to the summit, but I take great pleasure in capturing the jersey," Sastre said through a translator. "A pure climber has to take advantage of his opportunities, and this was mine."

Sastre, a five-time top-10 finisher at the Tour who also won a mountain stage in 2003, beat most of the other title threats by more than two minutes. The 33-year-old Spaniard is riding in his eighth Tour, and this is his first yellow jersey.

"It's a dream come true," he said.

The stage was the last of three in the Alps. Riders will face a time trial Saturday that's likely to determine the winner. Two mostly flat stages in the meantime aren't likely to influence the leading bunch.

Cadel Evans of Australia remains a favorite to win the Tour, barring a crash or other mishap, because he is the best time-trial cyclist among the contenders.

Overall, Sastre leads Schleck by

1 minute, 24 seconds, and Bernhard Kohl of Germany by 1:33. Evans is fourth, 1:34 behind. Among other strong time-trial riders, Denis Menchov of Russia is fifth, 2:39 behind, and Christian Vande Velde of the United States is sixth, 4:41 back.

Team CSC was dominant up the first two climbs, leading the group around the race leader that split ahead of the main pack. By the base of L'Alpe d'Huez, Schleck had five teammates escorting him.

It was then that Sastre burst ahead, and he continued to extend his lead up the famed final climb.

"I had to take the risk of attacking from the beginning" of the Alpe d'Huez, said Sastre, adding that he knew he needed to

and Ben Zobrist hit consecutive homers to lead the Rays.

Shields (9-6) gave up six hits and struck out seven in improving to 5-1 in his last six starts. His bid for a fourth complete game this season ended when Jack Cust doubled with one out in the ninth, but Troy Percival wrapped things up for his 20th save in 22 chances.

Blue Jays 2, Orioles 1, Suspended

At Baltimore, the game between Toronto and the Baltimore Orioles on Wednesday night was suspended by rain with the Blue Jays leading 2-1 in the sixth inning.

Play will resume Thursday afternoon with two outs in the top of the sixth. The teams will then play the finale of the four-game series.

Toronto went up 2-1 in the sixth, moments before a thundershower stopped play. Alex Rios led off with a single, stole second and scored on a single by Lyle Overbay. Orioles starter Jeremy Guthrie then got two outs before the rain came.

After a delay of more than 1 1/2 hours, the game was suspended.

Mets 6, Phillies 3

In New York, the New York Mets rebounded from a demoralizing defeat to beat the Philadelphia Phillies on Wednesday and take a share of the National League East division lead.

A day after giving up a three-run lead in the ninth inning to lose to their fellow NL East leader, New York—with closing pitcher Billy Wagner back from injury—managed to hold on for victory.

Jose Reyes' three-run homer snapped a sixth-inning tie to put the Mets ahead to stay.

Cubs 10, Diamondbacks 6

In Phoenix, Chicago stopped a slide and retained top spot in the NL Central with a win over Arizona.

The Cubs had lost five of six heading into the game as its lead in the division was sliced to one game, and they retained that thin advantage.

Reed Johnson had three hits, including a grand slam in the eighth, for Chicago. The grand slam keyed a six-run eighth for a team that had scored just two runs in its previous two games.

Brewers 3, Cardinals 0

In St. Louis, Milwaukee notched its seventh straight win by beating St.

Louis, keeping the Brewers on Chicago's heels in the NL Central.

Milwaukee starter C.C. Sabathia threw a three-hitter while striking out seven in his third straight complete game for his new team.

The Brewers have homered in 19 straight games, tying the franchise record set in 1996, and have 30 home runs in that stretch.

Braves 9, Marlins 4

In Miami, Atlanta's win over Florida came at a cost, losing slugger Chipper Jones and pitcher Tim Hudson to injury.

Jones, the major league's batting leader at .369, hurt a hamstring in the fourth inning and immediately left the game.

Hudson departed with soreness in his pitching arm after throwing six shutout innings.

The team said both players will be evaluated further.

Rockies 5, Dodgers 3

In Denver, Matt Holliday drove in two runs, including one on a double that bounced off the pitcher's glove, as Colorado beat Los Angeles.

Jeff Baker scored twice for Colorado, which finished a seven-game home stand with a 6-1 record that kept them on the fringes of playoff contention.

Reds 9, Padres 5

In Cincinnati, Adam Dunn hit Cincinnati's first grand slam of the season to key the Reds' win over San Diego.

Defeat left San Diego pitcher Greg Maddux in the longest winless streak of his career. The 42-year-old Maddux hasn't won since May, going 14 starts without a victory. He left the game with a 3-2 lead in the sixth before the Reds rallied.

Cincinnati pitcher Bronson Arroyo won his fifth consecutive start—the most by a Reds pitcher since 2000.

Giants 6, Nationals 4

In San Francisco, Rich Aurilia lined a two-run double in the eighth inning to lift San Francisco over Washington.

The Giants won consecutive home games for the first time since June 1-2.

Pirates 8, Astros 7

In Houston, Pittsburgh edged Houston to bring up its first three-game winning streak since May.

Jason Bay hit a two-run homer to give the Pirates their first road sweep of the season.

gain time on Evans and Menchov to have a shot at the title.

Now it is likely to come down to whether Sastre has enough of a lead on Evans to hold him off in the time trial.

"I have two days to enjoy the yellow jersey and on Saturday I'll think about the time trial," Sastre said. "I'll find out then if I am able to win the Tour."

In the first time trial—Stage 4 in and around Cholet—Evans was fourth, 27 seconds behind stage winner Stefan Schumacher of Germany. Sastre was 28th, 1:43 back.

But Saturday's time trial—the next to last stage before the three-week race ends on the Champs-Elysees on Sunday—is nearly twice as long. It takes riders along 53 kilometers (32.9 miles) from Cerilly to Saint-Etienne.

to Saint-Amand-Montrond.

Evans, who was in a group of other race favorites, said he didn't stand much chance of catching Sastre on Wednesday—even if he did lead them up the climb for much of the last few kilometers (miles).

"When you have the 10 best bike riders in the world behind your wheel and you have a 2-minute gap to close on one of the best climbers in the world, it's not any situation to be in," Evans said.

"It will take a good time trial" to win the Tour, Evans added. "I hope that I'll have the legs on Saturday. We'll see."

Thursday's stage is a 196.5-kilometer (122.1-mile) ride through medium mountains from Bourg-d'Oisans to Saint-Etienne.

Childress leaves Hawks to sign with Greek club

By RACHEL COHEN
AP SPORTS WRITER

 Josh Childress is leaving the Atlanta Hawks for Greek club Olympiakos, reversing the course of the many international stars who have signed with the NBA.

Heading overseas allows Childress to make more money than he could have as a restricted free agent in the United States. The Hawks had the right to match an offer from another NBA team, but not from an international club.

Agent Jim Tanner said Wednesday the three-year deal was worth about \$20 million after taxes. The money is guaranteed, and Childress can opt out of the contract after each year.

"I've talked to a few guys, and it could become a trend," Childress said on a conference call about other Americans following his lead. "I'm not so sure it won't. It's different. We thought out of the box a little on this one."

The 6-foot-8, 210-pound guard/forward averaged 11.8 points and 4.9 rebounds as the Hawks' top reserve last season. He averaged 11.1 points and 5.6 rebounds in four years with Atlanta about being drafted sixth overall in 2004 out of Stanford.

Childress said he intended to re-sign with the Hawks, who made the playoffs for the first time since 1999 and pushed eventual champion Boston to seven games in the first round. But he felt the team didn't show a sense of urgency in making a deal, and he turned down an offer he considered too low.

Atlanta general manager Rick Sund said that while he believes the Hawks made a proposal that was competitive within the NBA, it would have been fiscally irresponsible to try to match Olympiakos. Sund wouldn't reveal the exact numbers of Atlanta's offer.



AP
Atlanta Hawks guard Josh Childress reacts as time runs out in Game 6 of a first-round NBA playoff basketball series against the Boston Celtics in Atlanta.

But he said it exceeded the salary cap's midlevel exception, which is more than \$5.5 million, and would've have made

Childress the team's fourth-highest paid player.

"Obviously I'm not happy with it be-

Nets acquire Dooling from Magic for cash

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—The New Jersey Nets acquired guard Keyon Dooling from the Orlando Magic in a sign and trade deal on Monday.

In exchange for Dooling, the Nets gave the Magic cash and the trade exception they got in the deal that sent Jason Kidd to the Dallas Mavericks.

"Keyon is a versatile NBA veteran, and we are pleased to add him to our roster," Nets president Rod Thorn said. "His ability to play both the point and shooting guard positions will add flexibility and depth to our backcourt rotation."

Dooling averaged 8.1 points, 1.4 rebounds and 1.8 assists in 72 games for

Orlando last season. The eight-year NBA veteran has appeared in 465 games with the Clippers, Heat and Magic, holding career averages of 6.8 points, 1.3 rebounds and 1.9 assists.

Dooling was originally taken with the 10th overall pick out of Missouri in the 2000 NBA Draft.

LeBron James likely to miss exhibition against Canada



L A S V E G A S
(AP)—U.S. forward LeBron James likely will miss Friday's exhibition against

Canada as he recovers from a mild right ankle sprain. James shot baskets on the sidelines but was held out of a scrimmage at Valley High School on Wednesday.

"If the gold medal game was tomorrow, he'd play," coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "But we're not playing the gold medal game, or a medal round game right now. So we would rather be cautious right now."

"I would say right now LeBron wouldn't play on Friday," Krzyzewski said. "I don't think that's a wise decision, especially if he hasn't practiced."

James injured his ankle when he landed on Kevin Durant's foot during

a Tuesday scrimmage between Team USA and a select squad of young NBA players. James said it improved overnight, and he moved without a limp after reporters were admitted to the gym at the end of practice.

"It's a lot better today than it was yesterday," he said.

Asked if he thought he could play against Canada, James said, "Right now it's probably a 'no,' just for precautionary reasons. But I will be ready once we hit the road."

James has had problems with both ankles.

In January, James missed a game with the Cleveland Cavaliers because of an ankle sprain. He returned to score 28 points in a victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Feb. 2.

A few weeks later, James left a game against Boston late in the first

half with an ankle injury. X-rays were negative and James returned for the start of the second.

"I've done it so many times, I don't know if it's right or left (ankle)," James said with a chuckle.

The Americans were relieved to learn that James' ankle responded well on Wednesday. Although they're heavily favored to bring home the gold medal for the first time since 2000, injuries could upset the fragile balance of a team that is still learning to play together.

"The team that can stay injury-free throughout these games, that's a very good team that's going to have the best chance of winning," James said. "So we need all 12 guys. No one can get hurt."

The U.S. has already dealt with an injury to another starter, center Dwight Howard, who is returning from a stress fracture to his sternum.

Celtics re-sign House, Allen for title defense

BOSTON (AP)—Eddie House had virtually disappeared from the Boston rotation during the Celtics' run to the NBA title. When he got in the game, though, he showed his worth.

House, who made a key 3-pointer while pouring in 11 points in 25 minutes in Game 4 against the Los Angeles Lakers, agreed to terms with the defending champions on Monday. Tony Allen, another backup guard whose development slowed when he tore ligaments in his knee during the 2006-07 season, also re-upped with the team.

The Celtics lost sixth man James Posey to free agency last week, but Monday's deals give the team a chance to return most of its key players when it goes for an 18th title next season. All five starters are under contract, and only injured Scot Pollard and aging veterans P.J. Brown and Sam Cassell are left on the market.

Although better suited as a shooting guard, House was the backup to point

guard Rajon Rondo for most of the regular season, averaging 7.5 points and 19 minutes per game. After Boston signed Cassell in March, House's role was reduced. He played a total of 2 minutes over six games late in the Eastern Conference finals and early in the NBA finals against Los Angeles.

But in Game 4 against the Lakers, House scored nine of his 11 points in the second half, including a baseline jumper with 4:07 left to give Boston its first lead of the game, 84-83. The Celtics went on to win in six games for their unprecedented 17th NBA championship.

Allen was coming into his own as a rising star, averaging 19 points in a 14-game span for the otherwise woeful Celtics in December 2006 before he blew out his knee on a meaningless breakaway dunk and missing the rest of the season. He has shown signs of returning to that form, but his minutes have largely gone elsewhere.

"Especially guys in the midlevel range when they can go over to Europe and probably make a little bit more money, it's always a better situation for them."

Phoenix Suns chairman Jerry Colangelo, the managing director for USA Basketball, expected the trend to be limited to players like Childress who are solid contributors but not big stars.

"It's an opportunity for players who fall into that kind of a niche or category to have an option available to them," Colangelo said. "So it's a players' market."

After an initial meeting with Olympiakos officials in Las Vegas, Childress traveled to Athens on Sunday and liked what he saw. He said he feels confident he can adapt to a different culture.

The Hawks would retain Childress' NBA rights, and he would remain a restricted free agent, if they make a qualifying offer each year, Babby said. That would count against their salary cap, though. If they don't, he'd become an unrestricted free agent.

Olympiakos finished runner-up in the Greek basketball league last year, behind rival Panathinaikos. It has boosted its roster with summer transfers—including Greece star Theodoros Papaloukas, who was signed from CSKA Moscow.

Meanwhile, Dwyane Wade, one of the top reserves, is coming back from left knee surgery. Krzyzewski said Wade has performed well this week.

"I think Dwyane has been terrific," Krzyzewski said. "The stuff he and (trainer) Tim Grover have done together in coming back shows that he's made an amazing commitment to being in topflight shape and getting over his injury. He's been kind of the most pleasant surprise of our three days because he didn't know what to expect because he was out the last portion of the season."

Players had at least a month off—and in some cases several months off—between the end of their NBA seasons and the start of training camp. But given the length of the regular season and the playoffs, it's no surprise that many players are coping

with aches and pains.

Starting guard Kobe Bryant, for example, has a torn ligament in his right pinkie, which could require surgery after the Olympics. But the injury didn't stop Bryant from winning the NBA MVP award and leading the Los Angeles Lakers to the NBA finals.

"These guys are never 100 percent, and you know what, neither are the guys we're playing against, because they're either in the NBA or they're playing in the top league in Europe," Krzyzewski said. "I think that equals out. So for us to even talk about it, I think it shows a little weakness on our part."

"Although we're not making excuses, if we're always talking about injury, or recovering from injury or whatever, it's almost like, 'Feel sorry for us.' This is the way it is. A lot of people go to work sick and aching."

Ginebra, Magnolia scuttle Final 4 foes



MANILA, Philippines—“We don’t know how we got here. We just know that we’re here,” said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao just after qualifying outright for the Smart PBA Fiesta Cup semifinals.

Sunday night, Guiao and the Barako didn’t know what hit them at the start of their best-seven-series with Barangay Ginebra.

The Gin Kings opened up with all guns firing, building commanding leads early on and roaring to a lopsided 108-82 victory over the listless Barako and a 1-0 lead in their Final Four showdown at the packed Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

Ginebra held Red Bull to just

10 first-quarter points to kick off a virtual walkover for the Kings, just like the Magnolia Beverage Masters, who tore an importless Air21 to shreds, 113-87, in the first game.

Birthday boy Chris Alexander had 16 points and 17 rebounds and starting point guard Jay-Jay Helterbrand also had a double-double with 16 points and 10 assists as the Kings won for the ninth straight game and looked truly formidable.

But coach Jong Uichico was quick to downplay the victory.

“We’ve never thought about the streak,” he said later. “This is just the first game and it doesn’t mean anything. It’s a seven-game series and we know what Red Bull is capable of doing.

“We have to be always prepared because we know that, as the series goes on, Red Bull can come back.”

So off-form were the Barako that Adam Parada was held to just six points and eight rebounds and was used for a mere 23 minutes by Guiao, who threw in the towel early in the fourth quarter by recalling his stars to the bench.

Magnolia coach Siot Tanquingcen got his charges to focus in the second half after describing them as “complacent” in the opening half. The Beverage Masters trailed by five points at one stage as the Express played heads-up even with import Steven Thomas scheduled to return only Monday.

Magnolia needed a big clos-

ing spurt in the second period and a solid third quarter start to finally take the fight out of the Express, the elimination-round topnotchers who missed Thomas’ 23.4-point and 16.5-rebound averages.

Thomas attended the Cleveland Cavaliers’ training camp and is on his way back to the country. He will be practicing with the Express starting Monday afternoon.

“The first half was played poorly,” Tanquingcen told scribes later. “Magaling din ang Air21 (Air21 is also good), but they had a terrible disadvantage. My players were complacent (that’s why we trailed).

“I’m sure it will be an awfully different story (in Game 2) with their import returning. They will

get a huge confidence boost and we must be able to match that.”

The Express fought through their handicap in the first half, even leading by as many as 44-39 after five straight points from Wynne Arboleda heading into the final 4:48 of the second period.

First Game

Magnolia 113 — McCaskill 34, Tugade 22, Hontiveros 11, Racela 10, Pena 10, Pingris 6, Ildefonso 6, Bono 4, Gonzales 3, Calaguio 3, Eman 2, Cortez 2, Villanueva 0.

Air21 87 — Se 31, Billones 13, Santos 12, David 9, De Ocampo 8, Canaleta 7, Arboleda 5,

Kramer 2, Cruz 0, Intal 0, Espinas 0, Sotto 0.

Quarters: 31-26, 50-46, 77-59, 113-87

Second Game

Barangay Ginebra 108 — Alexander 16, Helterbrand 16, Caguioa 15, Valenzuela 13, Aratadi 12, Menk 10, Pacana 9, Salvacion 5, Crisano 4, Escalona 3, Reavis 3, Mamaril 2, Pablo 0.

Red Bull 82 — Najorda 19, Duncil 16, Pennisi 8, Baguio 7, Juntilla 6, Parada 6, Cruz 6, Hrabak 6, Alvarez 3, Robinson 2, Adriano 2, Bugia 1, Ybanez 0.

Quarters: 26-10, 50-37, 79-57, 108-82. (PDI)

RANGERS

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Rangers a lead-off runner in the 10th when he singled off Camacho. With Sillil on the batter’s box, Sablan would successfully steal second before a single by Sillil advanced him to third.

But the Division of Sports and Recreation employee

wasn’t done as the Falcons’ rightfielder bobbled the ball and Sablan quickly took advantage and sprinted to home plate for the winning run.

Benwachi Taisacan, who tied Pangelinan in this season’s homerun race with two apiece, led the Rangers in the win by going 3-for-4 with an RBI. Mario Sablan, Sillil, J.J. Laniyo, and Guerrero also had a hit each for

the Rangers. Tenorio and J.P. Sablan also combined for three strikeouts in the win.

For the Falcons, Kalen went 1-for-2 with a run and a double. Their pitchers Teigita and Camacho recorded two strikeouts.

A week ago the Rangers broke its tie against the Falcons when it pummeled them 14-8 in a game that saw Ford’s Bansil and Pete Tomokane and Tana-

pag’s Ned Norita hit homeruns, a first in SML history.

The Rangers and Falcon resume their semifinal series tonight at the Oleai Sports Complex. The continuation of Game 1 of the best-of-three semifinals between pennant champion and perfect Rock Steady and fourth-place D9ers, meanwhile, was played last night, but results were still not available as of press time.

MAIMI

From Page 44

echoed Shimizu when he thanked all the sponsors that made it possible for Shimizu and Halliday to compete in the 28th Kaise Triathlon.

“With this, I would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to all the generous sponsors and

supporters that made this participation possible for us. First and foremost without NWA Japan, Taga Inc., DFS Saipan, PIC, and MVA we could not have achieved this feat,” he said.

Shimizu and Halliday made history when they became the first participants from the CNMI to complete the Kaise Triathlon during its 28th staging last Sunday in Tottori Prefecture, Yo-

nago City in Kaise, Japan.

Shimizu finished the course in 10:42:32, which was 103rd overall and seventh among women participants.

The veteran triathlete, who finished second to Renata Burcher in the 2008 Tagaman Triathlon, finished the exhausting 3-kilometer swim in 54:18, negotiated the 145-km bike in 5:17:13, and then battled the

42.195-km run in 4:31:01.

Meanwhile, Timian transplant Halliday crossed the finish line 201st overall with a time of 11:31:43. His splits were 56:37 in the swim, 5:31:13 in the bike, and 5:03:53 in the run.

The 28th Kaise Triathlon drew 850 participants from Japan, a sprinkling of triathletes from South Korea, as well as the two entrants from the CNMI.

HIRO

From Page 44

There is no female swimmer in the CNMI today who can beat that swim. I truly believe that she is currently the top female freestyle swimmer of the CNMI,” he said.

The coach of Tsunami Saipan, who shook hands with the departing Stewart during last weekend’s meet, said the rest of the members of the fledgling

club shares his opinion on Kimball’s performance.

“Not only me, but all of Tsunami swimmers and parents were impressed by her performance. Her result was also expected by our team because Tsunami Saipan swimmers know she practices hard all the time,” he added.

Tsunami Saipan and SSC swimmers share the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Kimball made waves in the pool in last Friday’s and Saturday’s meet when her 1:05.92

in the 100m freestyle set a new record in the girls’ 12-and-under age group.

She also came close to the 200m and 50m freestyle records, missing both by tenths of a second, according to Stewart. Kimball also dropped seconds off her personal bests in the 200m freestyle to 2:26.98 and a second faster in the 50m freestyle to 30.68.

In related news, Kimura reminded Tsunami Saipan parents and swimmers as well as those interested that the club’s 2008-

2008 season will start of Aug. 4.

“We have some more slots in 6-8 years-old beginners class and youth beginners class,” he said, adding that Tsunami Saipan will soon roll out a program for children 5 years old and under.

For more information about Tsunami Saipan’s 2008-2009 season and the beginners classes lined up for the year, contact club manager Yuko Kimura at 323-3566. She can also be reached via email at tsunamisaipan@yahoo.co.jp.

CNMI

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them and improved their record to 3-2 and second behind Pacific Pool champion Guam, which finished 5-0.

The CNMI actually wasn’t assured of the second spot in the division until Guam clobbered Australia, 5-0, in the next game. New Zealand, meanwhile, edged the Philippines, 1-0, in the other Pacific Pool game.

New Zealand, represented here by Bayside Westhaven Little League, thus finished the tourney with a 2-3 mark, the same as Australia’s Hill Little League team and Indonesia’s Jakarta Little League squad.

The Philippines’ Tanauan Little League team wound up with a 1-4 win-loss mark.

By virtue of it succeeding the CNMI as Pacific champions, Guam will play Asia Pool champion Hong Kong for the 2008 Little League Asia-Pacific Tournament championship, which was held yesterday. Results, however, were still not available as of press time.

The former Crown Colony advanced to the title bout after beating defending champion Chinese-Taipei, 4-1, Wednesday. It finished with a 5-0 mark.

The loss relegated Taiwan (3-2) to third place in its division after South Korea (4-1) leapfrogged past them in the standings and played the CNMI

for third place yesterday.

Other Asia Pool results Wednesday saw South Korea beat Thailand, 10-0, and China blast India, 18-0. Thailand (2-3), China (1-4), and India (0-5) all finished below .500 in the win-loss column.

The winner between Hong Kong and Guam in the 2008 Little League Asia-Pacific Tournament will qualify to compete in the 2008 Little League Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, later this summer.

Making up the CNMI Major League All-Stars for the 2008 Little League Asia-Pacific Tournament are Jeremy Rabauliman, Chris Mizer, A.J. Lizama, Ricky Joe Riungel, A.J. Castro, Jared Sablan, Jun Rabauliman,

Raymond Saralu, A.J. Lizama, Frankie Camacho, Jonah Flores, Jerome Reyes, Keene Deleon Guerrero, Jeremy Lizama, and Poland Masaharu

Randall Aguon serves as manager and helping him in the dugout are head coach Elmer Sablan and assistant coach Manny Sablan.

Saipan’s best 9-12-year-old ballplayers booked a ticket to the 2008 Little League Asia-Pacific Tournament after beating Rota, 11-1, last June 12 at the Joaquin Ogo Sr. Baseball Field in Sinapalo.

The Little League is a non-profit organization with the objective of promoting health and integrity among the young by organizing baseball events.

get a huge confidence boost and we must be able to match that.”

The Express fought through their handicap in the first half, even leading by as many as 44-39 after five straight points from Wynne Arboleda heading into the final 4:48 of the second period.

First Game

Magnolia 113 — McCaskill 34, Tugade 22, Hontiveros 11, Racela 10, Pena 10, Pingris 6, Ildefonso 6, Bono 4, Gonzales 3, Calaguio 3, Eman 2, Cortez 2, Villanueva 0.

Air21 87 — Se 31, Billones 13, Santos 12, David 9, De Ocampo 8, Canaleta 7, Arboleda 5,

Kramer 2, Cruz 0, Intal 0, Espinas 0, Sotto 0.

Quarters: 31-26, 50-46, 77-59, 113-87

Second Game

Barangay Ginebra 108 — Alexander 16, Helterbrand 16, Caguioa 15, Valenzuela 13, Aratadi 12, Menk 10, Pacana 9, Salvacion 5, Crisano 4, Escalona 3, Reavis 3, Mamaril 2, Pablo 0.

Red Bull 82 — Najorda 19, Duncil 16, Pennisi 8, Baguio 7, Juntilla 6, Parada 6, Cruz 6, Hrabak 6, Alvarez 3, Robinson 2, Adriano 2, Bugia 1, Ybanez 0.

Quarters: 26-10, 50-37, 79-57, 108-82. (PDI)

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	59	41	.590	—
Boston	60	43	.583	—
New York	56	45	.554	3
Toronto	49	51	.490	10
Baltimore	48	51	.485	10

Central Division

Chicago	59	42	.584	—
Milwaukee	58	43	.574	1
St. Louis	57	46	.553	3
Cincinnati	50	53	.485	10
Pittsburgh	47	54	.465	12
Houston	46	55	.455	13

West Division

28th Kaike Triathlon

Photos By
ED DIAZ AND TIM LANG



Maimi Shimizu negotiated the 145-kilometer bike course in 5:17:13.



Top, a slice of the 850 participants prior to the swim leg of the 28th Kaike Triathlon held last Sunday in Tottori Prefecture, Yonago City in Kaike, Japan.



Ken Halliday is greeted by well-wishers in the run portion of the triathlon, which he finished in 5:03:53.



Right, Maimi Shimizu and Ken Halliday raise each other's arms in triumph after completing the 28th Kaike Triathlon Sunday in Tottori Prefecture, Yonago City, Japan. Shimizu was the seventh fastest female with a time of 10:42:32, while Halliday checked in at 11:31:43.



Below, Maimi Shimizu and Ken Halliday are interviewed by NHK TV Japan after completing the 190.195-kilometer Kaike Triathlon.



Ken Halliday finished the grueling and hilly bike course in 5:31:13.



Maimi Shimizu completed the 42.195-kilometer run in 4:31:01.





Galarraga, Cabrera pace Tigers to 7-1 win, sweep of Royals

Armando Galarraga carried a perfect game into the seventh inning, Miguel Cabrera drove in three runs and the Detroit Tigers beat the Kansas City Royals 7-1 Wednesday to complete a three-game sweep. **40**

Saipan Tribune Sports

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Source: Goodell monitoring Favre situation

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell is monitoring the ongoing rift between the Green Bay Packers and Brett Favre.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Rangers rally past Falcons in BSML

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Ford Rangers continue to have Tanapag Falcons' number after rallying to a 6-5 10th-inning win against the defending champions in Game 1 of their best-of-three semifinal series in the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League Wednesday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

After Clifton Silil and Robert Bansil crossed home plate



to tie the count at 5-5 on fielding errors by the Falcons on the eighth, the Ford Rangers stole the game in the 10th inning when Mario Sablan took advantage of yet another error by Tanapag's outfields to race home for the winning run.

It was an unexpected turn of events for the Falcons as they



Ford Rangers' Mel Sakisat, left, swings on a pitch by Tanapag Falcons' Darson Camacho, right, in Game 1 of their best-of-three semifinal series in the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League last Wednesday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

led the game practically all the way before the eighth-inning malady brought the contest to extra innings.



Ford Rangers' Mel Sakisat, left, swings on a pitch by Tanapag Falcons' Darson Camacho, right, in Game 1 of their best-of-three semifinal series in the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League last Wednesday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

They were the first team to get a score when homerun king Mike

Pangelinan reached on an error by Rangers shortstop Greg Sasther.

The lead ballooned to 5-0 in the top of the fourth when Manny Evangelista brought in Ken Kalen, Evangelista and B.J. Sablan scored on an error by Rangers third baseman Ray Guerrero, and Henry Iguel touched home plate on an RBI by J.R. Suel.

The Joeten Motors Corp.-sponsored team finally got on the board in the bottom of the inning when Ben Taisacan's single scored Robert Bansil and consecutive balks by Falcons starting pitcher Pete Teigita allowed Mel Sakisat and Ben Taisacan to trim Tanapag's lead to 5-3.

The score would stay that way as starters Teigita and Rangers' Dung Tenorio finally zeroed in on the strike zone.

That was until the fateful eighth when Silil's and Bansil's plate-crossings knotted the score up at 5-all and Teigita's and Tenorio's replacements—J.P. Sablan for the Rangers and Darson Camacho for the Falcons—pitched a scoreless ninth.

But as providence would have it, Mario Sablan gave the

See RANGERS on Page 42

Maimi hopes to return to Kake next year

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR


After conquering the 28th Kaike Triathlon last Sunday in less than 11 hours, Maimi Shimizu said she was happy that she finished the race injury-free and is in fact already looking ahead to next year's race.

"This race was a great experience for me. It was my first Ironman, so my goal was to just finish the race with no injury. But the race was so much fun after all. I especially loved the hilly bike course. Race day was very hot, but thanks to the sunny weather, I could see how beautiful Kaike is," she said.

The 2008 Tagaman Triathlon runner-up said while the Kaike Triathlon was the longest race she has ever taken part in, she enjoyed every stroke, pedal, and step she took during the race.

"It took over 10 hours, but the race finished like a flash—meaning I really enjoyed this race and I did my best. Hopefully I can be more strong and return there again," she said.

Shimizu also thanked orga-



Maimi Shimizu and Ken Halliday are all smiles before the start of the 28th Kaike Triathlon last Sunday in Tottori Prefecture, Yonago City, Japan.

ED DIAZ

nizers of the Kaike Triathlon as well as the companies that sponsored her and Ken Halliday's trip to the Land of the Rising Sun.

"All the race organizers, volunteers, and spectators were very nice. I'm glad that I could compete in the Kaike Triathlon this time, and hope to return next year. Special thanks to Pacific Development Inc., Marianas Visitros Authority, Taga Inc., Northwest Airlines, Pacific Islands Club, and DFS Saipan for sponsoring me and Ken. I also want to thank Ed Diaz from MVA, Hiroko Tajima from PDI, and the Kaike Triathlon organizers for their wonderful support and friendship."

PDI president Yoichi Matsumura was overjoyed with the achievements of Shimizu and Halliday.

"After five years of continued participation, we were able to finally make a name for ourselves in the Kaike Triathlon. As you may already know, this is the first time we completed the real genuine Kaike triathlon course. Last year's course was redesigned to a shorter version due to bad weather," he said.

The PDI executive also



Saipan Swim Club's Grace Kimball beams as she learns she has broken the 100m freestyle age group record during last weekend's 2008 SSC Summer Classic at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Hiro hails Kimball's effort

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR


Grace Kimball's record-breaking performance in last weekend's 2008 SSC Summer Classic did not only caught the eye of his mentor but also of Tsu-

nami Swimming Center Saipan head coach Hiro Kimura's.

In a recent email to the *Saipan Tribune*, Kimura echoed Saipan Swim Club head coach Michael Stewart's praises to the 12-year-old achiever.

"The result of Grace's 100m freestyle was so respectfully.

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CNMI to play for third place

By MARK RABAGO
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The CNMI Major League All-Stars got a chance to salvage third place when they pummeled Indonesia, 12-2, last

Wednesday in the 2008 Little League Asia-Pacific Tournament at the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort.

Like their game against New Zealand the day before, the Little Leaguers from Saipan had all facets of their game working for

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